

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON
ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS**

2021–22 BUDGET ESTIMATES



**TRANSCRIPT OF EVIDENCE
TAKEN AT PERTH
WEDNESDAY, 20 OCTOBER 2021**

**SESSION THREE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

**Members
Hon Peter Collier (Chair)
Hon Samantha Rowe (Deputy Chair)
Hon Jackie Jarvis
Hon Nick Goiran
Hon Dr Brad Pettitt**

Hearing commenced at 2.01 pm

Hon SUE ELLERY

Minister for Education and Training, examined:

Ms LISA RODGERS

Director General, examined:

Mr JIM BELL

Deputy Director General, Student Achievement, examined:

Ms MELESHA SANDS

Deputy Director General, Schools, examined:

Mr JAY PECKITT

Deputy Director General, Education Business Services, examined:

Mr ALLAN BLAGAICH

Executive Director, School Curriculum and Standards Authority, examined:

Mrs PHILIPPA BEAMISH BURTON

Executive Director, Finance and Commercial Services, examined:

Mr DAMIEN STEWART

Executive Director, Workforce, examined:

Ms RAEHELLE LEE

Executive Director, Strategy and Policy, examined:

Ms ANNA BROWN

Director, Asset Planning Services, examined:

Mr RICHARD MILES

Director, Teacher Registration, examined:

The CHAIR: Welcome to witnesses and to members. The committee acknowledges and honours the traditional owners of the ancestral lands upon which we meet today, the Whadjuk Noongar people, and pays its respects to their elders, both past and present.

Can witnesses indicate whether they have understood and signed a document titled “Information for Witnesses”?

The WITNESSES: Yes.

The CHAIR: Your testimony before the committee must be complete and truthful to the best of your knowledge. This hearing is being recorded by Hansard and broadcast live on the Parliament’s website. The committee will place the uncorrected transcript of your evidence on the internet a few days after the hearing. When the transcript is finalised, the uncorrected version will be replaced by the finalised version. This is a public hearing, but the committee can elect to hear evidence in

private. If for some reason you wish to make a confidential statement, you should request that the evidence be taken in closed session before answering the question.

Members, as always before asking your question, I ask that you provide the relevant page and paragraph numbers of the relevant area. Let us go. Minister, do you have an opening statement?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I do not, thank you.

The CHAIR: I will start with the committee; Hon Jackie Jarvis.

Hon JACKIE JARVIS: I am referring to page 363 of budget paper No 2, volume 1. At the very bottom of page 363 there is a significant amount allocated to specialist career practitioners, which I believe are different from the career teachers that perhaps we might be used to. I am interested in how many specialist career practitioners there are, with particular interest in regional locations. How many are based in the regions?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Thank you. This was one of our key election commitments. It is the appointment of 70 career practitioners in our public schools. I am not sure, honourable member, but my observation of career counsellors, career practitioners, is that there are some amazing ones, some really excellent ones, really well connected with industry and their school community, but you would have to say that it was a little bit patchy. This election commitment is about a serious investment in upgrading not just the status but ensuring that we provide professional development for career practitioners. Each of these will lead whole-of-school career development for students and help them to engage with industry. They will support student pathways. I have recently announced the places that they will be, so 21 of the 70 will be in schools based in regional WA. A further practitioner will be placed at SIDE, the School of Isolated and Distance Education, to support those students who are based in really remote regions to ensure that they have access and assistance as well. The career practitioner positions were recently advertised and I understand the response has been good, and we anticipate that they will be starting at the start of the next school year, 2022.

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: Thank you. I will start on page 376 of budget paper No 2, volume 1, referring to the line item around the “Schools Clean Energy Program” under the new works election commitments. Can I just have a bit of a sense of how many schools expect deliverables of this spend? That would be useful, please.

Hon SUE ELLERY: This was an election commitment as well. In total, I think it is about a \$44 million clean energy fund to enable schools to apply to choose out of a range of options that meet their needs and are suitable to their schools to really do three things: to help the schools reduce their energy spend; to provide a learning exercise—a real-life learning opportunity in schools; and also, obviously, to improve the environment. Honourable member, I am sure in your previous role, you visited many schools. I can pretty much tell the age of a school now, and I suspect the chair can too, by the pitch of the roof and the nature of the bricks. There are some schools, for example, where solar is not going to be possible just because of the actual structure of the buildings, so we wanted to put in place a range of measures that schools could choose from. That includes virtual power plants, batteries and a range of other, if I can describe them as kind of less sexy, but still effective facilities to do that. Some of those virtual power plants are already in place. Belridge senior high has got one, and one of the schools in Kalgoorlie—I think it is Kalgoorlie–Boulder Community High School. For example, batteries are already installed at Baldivis, Belridge, Butler, Coastal Lakes College, Comet Bay, Gilmore, Joseph Banks, Kalgoorlie–Boulder Community High School, Rossmoyne and Success Primary School. But, really, the fund is about schools applying and then choosing what is going to be right for their school.

The CHAIR: A fine school, that Kalgoorlie–Boulder Community High School.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Did you also teach there? You probably went there.

The CHAIR: No, I went there.

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: I have a follow-on question, if you do not mind, through you, chair. Is it the intent that this pilot, if successful, will be extended to all schools? Is that the intent?

Hon SUE ELLERY: We certainly want to see how it works. I cannot give you a commitment that it will be extended to all schools. I make the point that a number of schools already have different energy systems in place, including solar. This is about seeing how we go. It is a big step forward from where we were.

[2.10 pm]

Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT: I have one more on this if you do not mind. Apologies for me not quite understanding the different categories. There is a solar schools program, which is on page 371 of budget paper No 2, volume 1. It is a \$5 million program that will benefit 30 schools. Why is that limited to 30 schools? I am trying to understand the different parts of this program.

Hon SUE ELLERY: There are actually three components of energy efficiency in the Schools Clean Energy program. The Schools Clean Energy technology program funding will be invested as follows: \$35.2 million to assist eligible schools that have a persistently high level of energy consumption costs with new energy technologies and/or measures; \$4.8 million to Synergy to provide an additional six schools—three in Kalgoorlie and three in Geraldton; and before the honourable member asks, that is because they are on the very edge of the SWIS—with virtual power plant battery systems that will further enhance our commitment to the initial schools virtual power plant pilot project; and \$4.6 million to Horizon to install solar panels in a further 28 schools as part of the Solar Schools program across the Kimberley, which will get 18, and the Pilbara, which will get 10.

The CHAIR: Can I follow up on the Solar Schools program? That is not just for 30 schools because that has been going for some time has it not?

Hon SUE ELLERY: The total amount of money in this budget is \$44.6 million. Solar Schools has already started, so we are adding to that, and then doing those other elements that I talked about as well.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Minister, it will not surprise you that my questions relate to harmful sexual behaviours in the school setting.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Would you like to take me to the budget paper?

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Yes—volume 1, page 363, the total appropriations. The minister might be aware that the Commissioner for Children and Young People recently tabled a report entitled *Independent review into the Department of Communities' policies and practices in the placement of children with harmful sexual behaviours in residential care settings*. In that report, the commissioner says —

Three years ago, I recommended that an across-government approach was required in Western Australia by the Departments of Communities, Education, Health, Justice, Police and the Mental Health Commission to bring a strategic focus to the system improvements required for children and young people with harmful sexual behaviours.

What budget allocation has the Department of Education provided to address this recommendation from the Commissioner for Children and Young People?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Honourable member, there is not a specific budget allocation. The department is expected to implement measures around this, and has been since we were elected in 2017, but there is not a specific line item in the budget.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: When the commissioner said three years ago that he recommended that this be done, what has the Department of Education done?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Thank you. The honourable member would be aware that there is a multiagency protocol for educational options for young people who have been charged with harmful sexual behaviours. That process has continued to evolve and develop and the RAMP system, for example, which is the mechanism or the policy framework that is used to manage when police advise schools that a child has been charged, has continued to evolve. Communities and Education are engaged in that process and that has continued throughout.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Minister, I seem to recall that you were responsible for implementing that RAMPS system. My recollection is that that might have occurred in late 2017. Does that sound right?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It started in early 2017.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: The Commissioner for Children and Young People in this report, which was tabled last month, refers to recommendations that he made, including for the Department of Education, three years ago. In that respect, I am thinking of September 2018, which is after the RAMP process had been implemented by you. Other than the RAMP process, what has the Department of Education done with respect to this recommendation in the last three years?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I do not know that we have information here that goes to the specific response to his recommendations because, as I said, there is not a line item in this budget and this is a forum to discuss matters related to the budget. To save the committee time, I do not have it with me here—as I said, we are here to canvas the elements in the budget, and that is not in the budget—but I am happy to take it as a supplementary.

[Supplementary Information No C1.]

Hon NICK GOIRAN: When these RAMPs are being developed, how much consultation is done with the victim and the victim's family?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will walk you through how it actually works. In the first instance, it deals with confidentiality. All the information about, for example, where the alleged perpetrator might end up, is not necessarily shared with the family of the victim. I will walk you through the system. The police force notifies the director general that a child has been charged. The deputy director general of schools advises the relevant director of education, which is like the regional education person, who contacts the school to provide notification, supporting safety planning documentation and support. The notification that they get includes the bail conditions that require a parent or carer of the student charged to meet with the principal to discuss the planning that will be undertaken. Before the student can return, a multiagency strategy meeting is coordinated by the director of education or their delegate. Agencies will be represented in that.

In terms of risk assessment and safety planning factors, a range of things are considered, including what restrictions are placed on the alleged perpetrator, attendance, therapeutic options, what resources might be required by the school, agreement on what will be the stress indicators—so the triggers—if something needs to change and what those consequential actions might be, and an agreement on strategies to protect the victim where the victim is enrolled in the same school. That school then develops a RAMP. I am looking to the bit about engagement with the family. When the student attends the same school, school planning considerations include liaison with the victim and their family.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Is there always consultation with the victim and the families?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Where the student attends the same school, the policy is that yes, that should happen. There was a recent example where that did not happen. I have met with the parents of the victim at that school and expressed my concern to the department about the fact that that did not happen properly.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Yes, thank you, minister. I recall you making those comments publicly and I share your concern. Have there been any cases where, when there has been this consultation with the victims and the families, that they have said that they do not want to be at the same school as the perpetrator and yet the perpetrator still remained at the school?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I do not know that I or anyone here could, without going back and looking at the individual files, identify if that has happened. Certainly, in the case of the most recent example, what was very clear from the victim and her family was they did not want to be in the same school. They wanted to stay at the school but they did not want to be at the same school as the perpetrator, so steps were taken but they were not taken fast enough. Like I said, I have expressed my point of view about that. I probably have some numbers. As at 18 October this year, there were eight occasions where the victim and the alleged perpetrator were enrolled at the same school. Of these eight, three are attending the same school as their alleged perpetrator, five are not. Of the five who are not, three of them have moved on, one perpetrator is excluded, awaiting placement, and the last one is on remand in Banksia Hill.

[2.20 pm]

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Just to get clarity on that, minister, as at 18 October, there were eight instances where the victim and the perpetrator were at the same school?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Enrolled.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Enrolled, but actually attending the school together was only three out of the eight?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Correct.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Right. As for the five where that is no longer occurring, which in my view is a good thing, in any of those five instances is it actually the victim that is then moved on to a different school, or is it always the perpetrators?

Hon SUE ELLERY: No, it is the perpetrators.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Right, so there is no circumstance where the victim is expected to move on?

Hon SUE ELLERY: No.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Good. Minister, with regard to the RAMPs, you indicated that the starting point was that police advise the director general that a person has been charged. Does that mean that RAMPs are not done in the absence of charges being laid?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Sometimes they can be. If the school itself is aware, like, by observation that a student is not behaving in an appropriate way, using the RAMP framework, they will put a plan in place around those students. It is not unusual for schools to use the RAMP mechanism or framework as a way of doing the planning around inappropriate behaviour.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: How many RAMPs—I do not know if the right terminology is “active”?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Sure.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: How many live RAMPs are underway?

Hon SUE ELLERY: As at 18 October, 127.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: That is a lot larger number than I expected, minister. There are 127 RAMPs, but out of the 127 —

Hon SUE ELLERY: Sorry, honourable member. Forgive me. For the period from February 2017 to 18 October 2021, across that period, there are 127 RAMPs for students.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Right, so about four and a half years' worth. Since you implemented the system, there have been 127 RAMPs prepared, but how many are active? Some students might have graduated or moved on.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes. Right at this moment, I do not know that I can say that.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Because I think that part of the protocol includes a requirement for the RAMPs to be reviewed from time to time, so presumably the department will know how many they need to be reviewing?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I think, to make sure we give you the accurate number, we will take that on notice. [*Supplementary Information No C2.*]

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Perhaps a final question on this, if I may, chair. Minister, to be clear, these 127 RAMPs—maybe you need to take this on notice—I would be interested to know: have they only ever been prepared when police have advised the department that a person has been charged? I am interested to see the proportion of RAMPs that have been prepared notwithstanding the fact that charges might not have been laid. There could be very good reasons why the police have decided they would not lay charges because they did not think they could sustain a prosecution, but that does not mean that there is not this trauma for the victim, because the incident occurred.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am sorry; I was getting advice while you were saying the last bit. The RAMP might stay in place beyond the legal issue being resolved. That is normal.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Yes, I agree with that. That is the end point. In terms of the commencement, I want to know, of the 127 RAMPs, were any of them commenced before charges were laid, or is that always the starting point?

Hon SUE ELLERY: The trigger for the RAMPs in respect of the protocol has got to be some contact from the police. Now, whether it is them actually saying, "We've laid charges", or, "You need to know we're about to lay charges but this looks serious", I cannot tell you that off the top of my head, but I can take that on notice.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Just to clarify, what I am just wanting to know, though, in that circumstance that you mentioned earlier, sometimes the school might observe this type of behaviour going on, so rather than waiting for the police to then contact them and say, "By the way, we've charged the person over the behaviour you have seen", I would like to think that the school then says, "Well, forget about the police, we're implementing the RAMP system now."

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes. Just so you know, honourable member, there is not necessarily central oversight of the school doing that off its own bat, off its own circumstances. What has central oversight is when the protocol is formally triggered by the contact from the police.

The CHAIR: I am a little confused. Have you got the information you require, then? I think you have.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: It is still not clear to me if any of the 127 RAMPs were prepared during that four-and-a-half-year period of time in the absence of charges having been laid.

Hon SUE ELLERY: The 127 is formal triggering of the protocol, which is by the police.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Therefore, charges must have been laid?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, I know you want to know that, but I just do not want to say that charges have been laid, because I want to double-check that sometimes the police do not say, “We think we’re going to lay charges”, and for some reason they do not, but the behaviour did happen and so this needs to be in place.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: So, could we take that on notice?

The CHAIR: Yes, that is the aspect we need to have on notice, whether or not they were charged. [Supplementary Information No C3.]

Hon JACKIE JARVIS: Is it possible to ask a question on behalf of Hon Samantha Rowe?

The CHAIR: Absolutely. We will go to Hon Jackie Jarvis on behalf of Hon Samantha Rowe.

Hon JACKIE JARVIS: She has been called away on urgent parliamentary business. She has asked me to ask a question with regard to an item in budget paper No 2, volume 1, page 371. It is the twenty-second dot point in relation to the \$87.6 million for new and repurposed facilities to provide flexible learning environments in relation to STEM. Hon Samantha Rowe has asked if you can provide some further information about that commitment.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I can. This builds on a commitment that we made and then delivered in the first term of government around really trying to upgrade STEM facilities. In particular, in that first commitment, it was around primary schools and trying to make sure that we lifted their capacity in that area. The item that is referred to on that page is about our statewide secondary STEM classroom upgrade program. More than 85 secondary schools across WA will get money for, depending on their particular configuration, either a new STEM classroom or upgrades to an existing classroom to transform it into a STEM lab.

In the member’s region of East Metro, that includes new STEM classrooms at Eastern Hills Senior High School, Lesmurdie Senior High School, Morley Senior High School and Thornlie Senior High School, and there will be STEM upgrades at a further 10 schools in the east region, but I do not have that list with me. We know that STEM skills are really important for the jobs of the future, and trying to make sure that we create authentic learning environments for STEM is really important as well, and we want to encourage students to use STEM beyond secondary school, so into either TAFE or university. This program complements the extension of our primary school program where we have already delivered 200 new science labs, and over the next three years we are going to add 130 primary schools who will have new labs installed.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Could I go to budget paper No 2, volume 1, page 363, under “Election Commitments”, “Specialised Career Practitioners”. It just follows from some questions asked by Hon Jackie Jarvis. I want to get some clarification on this, if I could. Minister, you did make some remarks with regard to some schools, but, as I understand, is it 70 schools that are expected to receive a career practitioner?

[2.30 pm]

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Is it the case that those schools will receive a dedicated practitioner or will that practitioner be allocated to a school but then work across other schools? I am keen to understand how it will work.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Sure. The election commitment is about dedicating them to one school. Frankly, I did consider whether or not we would try some form of hub, but actually, you have to know your school community. If you are going to be an effective career counsellor or career practitioner, you do have to have strong relationships with the students and sometimes the family, and have to have

strong connections with industry as well. It may be that this program evolves into something more than just being placed at a single school, but that is where we are going to start it.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: With the 70 schools, you mentioned that SIDE would also have practitioners. I just want to understand the breakup. How many career practitioners would be located at SIDE?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is one.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: How have the schools been selected?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It was lower socio-economic schools, so using the ICSEA measure and the size of the school as well, looking at student numbers to get the maximum bang for our buck. Those were the criteria that we used.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I am not sure whether Hon Jackie Jarvis asked this but are we able to receive a table of the list of schools that will receive a career practitioner? I just cannot recall whether or not —

Hon SUE ELLERY: I think I might have done a media release, but I am happy to provide it for you on notice.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: If we could, thank you.

[Supplementary Information No C4.]

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: As part of that election commitment, I understand that there was funding allocated for existing staff or teachers to be upskilled as well through a graduate certificate in career development and to enable them to be employed as a specialist. Is it —

Hon SUE ELLERY: That is what the 70 will get. That is the PD that the 70 will get.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: My query is, then, is the purpose to actually employ new staff or is it to upskill the staff who are already within that school system? I do appreciate that there are some staff who may be full-time but might have a 0.2 of their time to enable them to work on careers, but it is not necessarily full time.

Hon SUE ELLERY: No. It is new staff and it is providing those new staff with that PD. It may well be that there are existing staff who apply for one of those positions but it is new staff. This might help the honourable member as well. We are recruiting them now but the PD that they will get is a graduate certificate in career development. They will be recruited and they start, and they complete that graduate certificate in the first year of appointment. They will work with school leadership teams to plan and embed career development and work exposure activities into the curricular and co-curricular programs. The honourable member would be aware that we made a range of commitments around VET and STEM in secondary schools, so these people will work on those things as well.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I am sorry to keep on questioning on this; I am just a bit unclear. You are going to be employing new specialists, albeit that they are going to then going to receive PD with regard to a graduate certificate in career development. Is it not that you are seeking to employ staff who would already meet the requirements of a career practitioner? I am trying to work out what —

Hon SUE ELLERY: It will depend. School X has been allocated a career practitioner position. That position will be advertised and people, maybe from other schools, maybe from within that school, will apply for the position and be considered for that position. This is not about cost shifting to top-up an existing position. It is saying to school X, "You have these additional funds to employ someone to do this job. They have to be able to demonstrate to you that they're committed to doing this additional PD and that they can meet the requirements that you have for this position." That person

might be employed at the school and choose to apply for that position, but I expect that, in fact, we will get people from all over the place applying for those positions.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Are the positions full-time equivalents?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Are they expected to start in the beginning of the 2022 school year?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Okay, thank you. On page 365, under “Preschool Reform Agreement”, I asked the minister a question in Parliament around August this year regarding the negotiations and I do not think the negotiations had commenced. Could I ask where you are at with the commonwealth in regard to this?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is a very good question. The commonwealth has done a good thing, which is commit to the states, which we have been calling for a long time—the previous Minister for Education before me would have been calling for this—for a guarantee of funding for universal access to the commonwealth’s component of the four-year-old program. For years, it has been doing one year at a time. That means it is really impossible to plan and all states from all jurisdictions said, “Enough is enough.” In the commonwealth government’s budget, they announced they would make a five-year commitment, so a tick for that¹. The commonwealth being the commonwealth, my observation is of both persuasions, they put some requirements attached to that, which are not necessarily helpful for Western Australia because Western Australia’s circumstance in terms of four-year-olds is different to any other jurisdiction. We lead the nation and, on a whole range of measures, our four-year-olds are outperforming four-year-olds in other jurisdictions. One of the commonwealth’s requirements is what they are referring to as the money to follow the child, which means if a parent chooses to enrol their child in a four-year-old program that is delivered entirely by what is now called early childhood education—there is another “C” in there somewhere, but anyway²—as opposed to a four-year-old program delivered at a school, the commonwealth’s view is that they should get their proportion of the commonwealth’s money.

In Western Australia, the vast majority of four-year-old programs are delivered at schools. That was a very conscious decision made by Western Australia many years ago now to ensure we address the double drop-off for parents, address connection with all the other services that are available at schools, and that we get children school-ready. We have some issues with follow the child. We do not want to dilute or diminish some of the really great programs that are delivered to four-year-olds, for example, the one initiated by the former Minister for Education around KindiLink. That is partly funded out of that money and we do not want to lose KindiLink money. We are in negotiations now. I had a phone call with Minister Tudge maybe two weeks ago and we expressed to him some of our concerns. We listed some of our concerns; that is not the only one. There are some other things they want us to do, which we think are onerous for the component, which is what? As a percentage of what is spent on four-year-olds, what the commonwealth is contributing is quite small compared to what they are asking for in return. The upshot of all of that is that negotiations are ongoing. What Minister Tudge said, which I did appreciate, was “Lots of jurisdictions claim that their system is different; yours actually is”. He has shown a willingness to engage to protect what is happening in Western Australia. We do not want to dilute or diminish the great work that has been done and we certainly do not want to be worse off.

¹ A letter of clarification about this part of the transcript can be accessed on the committee webpage.

² A letter of clarification about this part of the transcript can be accessed on the committee webpage.

It is a live negotiation. So far I have said to the federal minister, “We want a good outcome here and we want to take advantage of the five-year funding, but we don’t want to disadvantage that cohort of students” so negotiations are ongoing.³

[2.40 pm]

The CHAIR: This is just a suggestion—never ever go weak at the knees against the feds; they always give in. Just stare them down.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Thank you. I will tell him you said that!

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Minister, thank you for that update. As I understand, and this is perhaps a requirement that has been put by the commonwealth, they want the negotiations completed by the end of this year, as I understand.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, they do.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Are there some contingency mechanisms that have put in place should that not occur, because we are obviously getting closer to the end of the year than the beginning.

Hon SUE ELLERY: We are not committed to that time line; that is their time line. There is something else that is going on, though, obviously, in the electoral cycle, which means I cannot see a federal government saying to WA, “If you don’t reach agreement by December 31st, we’re going to stop funding you.” I cannot see that happening. To the extent that Alan Tudge ever reads the *Hansard* of the Legislative Council in Western Australia, I think that we are in a strong position in the negotiations.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I am just interested, given those time frames that have been out in the public arena. My understanding is that one of the measures that they are seeking is with regard to a universal phonics test. Have you got a position with regard to that, minister?

Hon SUE ELLERY: They have not actually tied a phonics request to this funding. They do want an outcomes measure and we are disagreeing at the moment about what that might look like. They are pursuing phonics, but that is not tied up as part of this.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Okay; thanks for that clarification. Chair, with respect to early childhood—there is not a specific allocation here, but perhaps you will forgive me for taking a bit of licence—back in 2018, the Minister for Community Services announced a three-way partnership between the Minderoo Foundation, the government and TKI with respect to an early years initiative—around \$49 million, of which \$24-odd million was invested by the state. It is primarily focused on zero to four-year-olds and it is to identify four communities. There are delays in that aspect, but in my questioning in an earlier estimates to the parliamentary secretary to the Minister for Community Services, I did ask for a breakdown with regard to the funding of that \$24.6 million and she indicated that that was in kind, but she did mention education. I appreciate you might need to take that on notice but I would be keen to know what funding is provided, whether in kind or otherwise, from your department to that initiative.

Hon SUE ELLERY: What I can tell you now is that our in kind contribution includes a principal consultant and senior management direct support, so that is trying to assist those negotiations. I do not have any further breakdown of that. I am happy to take that on notice.

[*Supplementary Information No C5.*]

³ A letter of clarification about this part of the transcript can be accessed on the committee webpage.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: If we can turn to page 375, under “Other School Facilities” there is “Early Childhood Program”. Could I get some clarity with respect to that; is that for the construction of new early childhood facilities at schools?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Good question. Those funds are to upgrade older early childhood facilities to meet current standards in line with the primary school brief, which is “This is what schools should look like and this is what the standard should be”. That is what that money is for.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: With respect to the 2021–22 budget—I suppose for this financial year—could I get a breakdown of the schools that will be receiving those upgrades this financial year?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Honourable member, I do not think that list has been finalised so I will take it on notice, but it might be that the response is that government has not made a decision on those allocations yet.

[Supplementary Information No C6.]

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Further to that—I suppose this is just some clarification—in previous budgets there used to be a separate line item in and around this section for playground equipment and shade structures. There was a program in place for a number of years, and that was obviously funding to support playground areas, nature playgrounds and play equipment. I cannot find it listed in the budget. I am going to presume it might be grouped in another block of funding, but, I suppose, I would like confirmation as to whether or not the playground equipment and shade structure program continues to exist; and, if so, where it is located now in the budget?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am pretty sure we still put shade covers in schools.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: It is just that there used to be a line item for it and I cannot find it.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will have to take it on notice.

[Supplementary Information No C7.]

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Further to that, presuming that that funding is still provided under that particular program, if you could advise how much funding has been allocated to it for this financial year and across the forward estimates.

Hon SUE ELLERY: If we are able to, I will.

The CHAIR: That is all part of C7.

Hon LORNA HARPER: I would like to refer to page 364 of budget paper No 2, “Significant Issues Impacting the Agency”, number 4: “Services for students needing extra support, including school psychologists and alternative learning settings will continue to be a priority”. Can you please outline what this means for the students and when we will see more psychologists in our schools?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Thank you for the question. Without a shadow of a doubt, every stakeholder group in education is talking about an increased observation of mental health issues, starting at an alarming young age and also starting at, kind of, low-level anxiety through to much more serious clinical conditions and the impact that that is having. Teachers, in particular, really felt the need for additional assistance. Last year, the school psychologists from the three sectors—public, Catholic and independent—did a piece of work together. In the language of our party they caucused and they came and put a pitch to me saying that, basically, across the three sectors it was clear that we needed more support from school psychs. The way the state government funds this is that, obviously, as the employer in public education, the department directly employs a number of school psychologists, but we also fund the non-government schools—Catholic and independent. We give them a grant and they then allocate that to their school psych services. We made a commitment—an additional \$104 million, to increase the number of school psychs in the public sector to 100 across

the four years and then, by the same proportion, increase the grants to Catholic and independent schools for them to increase their numbers of school psychs as well, although obviously they are smaller so the scale is different but the proportion of increase was exactly the same.

[2.50 pm]

The first tranche of those will start at the beginning of the next school year, 2022. We have had conversations—I think it has been quite progressive—with the five universities about producing psychs. Those have been quite good conversations; the deans of the universities have been quite helpful, so that is a key part. In addition, when we introduced the campaign against school violence—I cannot remember what it was called; I want to call it the “School Violence Campaign”, but that would sound like we support it, and we do not!—we also announced that we would pilot alternative learning settings. By giving schools greater power, teachers and principals felt that they could be backed up to take a stand against students who were violent, particularly against staff, but also against other students. A consequence of that was saying, “You should know that you’ll be backed if you suspend and exclude.” But we have a legal and, frankly, moral obligation to continue to provide education for all students, so alternative learning settings were put in place as a trial. We have expanded those. They are not actually schools; they are not classrooms, where students go. They are wraparound services for each student: what is it that they need to continue their education? Do we just need to break the cycle for them, and they go to another school? Do they need to think about TAFE? What is it that they need—it often includes working with their families—to continue education in the best form for them? In addition to the school psychs, we are making sure that we have alternative learning settings in each of the education regions.

Hon PETER FOSTER: I refer to budget paper No 2, volume 1, and page 371 under “Asset Investment Program”, and in particular paragraph 30, with regard to the redevelopment of the Roebourne District High School. Roebourne is one of a number of older secondary schools in the Pilbara. Could I please have an update on what the government is doing to improve school infrastructure in the Pilbara?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Thank you, member. This is a really important piece of work, and it is an important piece of work to me personally. I do not think there are many people in metropolitan Perth who, if they were to go and look at the physical facilities of Roebourne District High School, would consider it suitable for any form of delivery of education. Having said that, some of the things that the educators in the school manage to achieve are outstanding, but they are doing so in facilities that are really not suitable.

One of the important things about that school is the engagement with Aboriginal elders in the community. I am sure you have been to the school; it has rickety, old steel steps which some of the elder ladies cannot go up and down, so this is one of the significant investments we made last year; the COVID recovery plan gave us the opportunity to do that. It is a \$42 million redevelopment of that school. Interestingly, in my other portfolio of training, we are also upgrading the local TAFE and making sure that those two institutions work closely together. That is a very significant piece of work. A lot of work is being done by people to engage with the community to make sure that they feel a good sense of ownership of what the design of the school will be, for example. That is a really important piece of work.

In respect of other projects in the Pilbara, we are investing heavily in primary and secondary school infrastructure. Just some of those include \$23 million for Karratha Senior High School and some of the primary schools—in particular Baynton West, which has been lobbying me for a while about enrolment growth and wanting to make sure they got a new classroom block, and they got that—as well as a new classroom block at Cassia Primary School. There is a lot of work going on.

Hon DAN CADDY: I take the minister back a page, to page 370, still under “Asset Investment Program”. A couple of paragraphs talk about exactly what is being offered—STEM classrooms for Balga Senior High School, for example, and performing arts centres. I want to take you to Scarborough Primary School. There are new classroom blocks for that school. Can the minister tell me where that is at, and exactly what that entails?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Sure. There is \$9.7 million for Scarborough Primary School for a new two-storey classroom block, with five general learning classrooms, one kindy room, two pre-primary classrooms, staff rooms and storerooms. I am not sure if the honourable member has seen some of the really outstanding classroom blocks that have been added to schools in older suburbs—I am thinking of West Leederville, Mt Hawthorn and Inglewood—where people for a long time thought that two-storey classroom blocks were not appropriate in a primary school setting, but they are outstanding classroom blocks, and that is what will happen at Scarborough. In addition to the classroom block there will be a new external play space built for the kindy and the pre-primary, and roof replacements and a new car park for staff. I am not sure where we are at in terms of the time line, but I will see if I can find out. Right now it is at the project definition stage, which is all the scoping work.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: I refer to page 369. The 2021–22 budget target is lower than the 2020–21 estimated actual due to the lower forecast number of renewals for teacher registration. Are you struggling to keep teachers?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Where are you looking, honourable member?

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Page 369, paragraph 3, under “Explanation of Significant Movements”.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Okay. You are asking about the note that refers to the target being lower due to the lower forecast number of renewals. As part of the government’s response to COVID, we pushed out the time line for the registration of teachers; we were trying to make it easier for everyone. The registration expiry date was extended by six months, so all teachers registered as at 6 April 2020 received a six-month extension on their period of registration.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: So there was no impact on teacher numbers?

Hon SUE ELLERY: No.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Will teachers be de-registered if they do not get vaccinated?

Hon SUE ELLERY: No, it is not a registration issue. The announcement that was made today, which I presume the honourable member is referring to, is an employment arrangement. The way that the Chief Health Officer will draft the order, I am advised, is that you will not be able to attend particular places—in this case, schools—as an employee, unless you are vaccinated. That will mean that the HR plan is yet to be worked out, but if you look at aged care as an example, honourable member, what happened was they were given a date by which the aged care workforce needed to double-dose vaccinated. They got to something like 99.8 per cent by the due date, even though at the beginning everyone was, “Shock, horror—we can’t do it.” It will be an employment arrangement. What they did with aged care, my understanding is that people were asked to provide evidence that they had been double-dosed by the due date.

If they were unable to provide that, they would most likely—I think this is what happened in aged care—exercise any leave while they consider their position. If they were still unable to demonstrate they had been vaccinated and refused to vaccinate, then that would trigger an employment termination process. Due process will need to be followed. People will need to be given the opportunity to demonstrate why—if there are extenuating circumstances or whatever—but,

ultimately, the consequence of working in a school and choosing not to be vaccinated will result in termination of employment.

[3.00 pm]

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Will that result in a termination payment due to changed conditions of employment?

Hon SUE ELLERY: The person is not being made redundant, if that is what you are suggesting. The person would, obviously, be entitled to all their leave arrangements. But this is not an exercise where the employer is no longer requiring their services; this is that person making a choice about whether or not they are vaccinated.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: But their terms of employment are changed; yes?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes; the HR process will all be set out and, I think, will most likely follow the process that was used in aged care, so due process will be offered along the pathway. But people need to be absolutely 100 per cent clear here: if you are working in a school, you are required to be double dose vaccinated by the start of school term 1, 2022.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Thank you. You mentioned the campaign against school violence. How many teachers in 2020–21 were subjected to violent acts by students?

Hon SUE ELLERY: That is not included in the budget papers. That is reported though; it is reported in the annual report. I understand the committee will most likely hold annual report hearings so you could explore that there.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: The universal access to non-government sector, \$11 million, this is on page 378, grants and subsidies. It just seems to disappear this year. There is a comment in there about negotiating a four-year agreement with the commonwealth. Where is that at given there is no funding this year? Page 378—I think that is right. Maybe I gave the wrong number.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Are you talking about universal access, which is the four-year-old program?

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Yes; non-government sector. There was just over \$11 million in grants and subsidies in previous years and this year it is zero.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Because we are negotiating, honourable member.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: That is right; yes. I am asking for an update on the negotiations.

Hon SUE ELLERY: You may have been out of the chamber.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: I heard it.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I gave an update of the negotiations.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: So this is part of those same negotiations?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is exactly the same.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Sorry; my apologies. Thank you for your response in relation to school attendance in those communities in the Kimberley in the parliamentary question about three months ago. The numbers obviously have been declining—school attendance has been declining over the last five years, significantly. But would you say that the approximately 35 per cent attendance at high school in Halls Creek is a crisis?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I wish I could say that it was, but it is not. Historically, we have really struggled for many years. To assist the officers, though, are you referring to a particular budget paper? That helps them get the notes for me.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Page 363, net appropriations, \$4.2 billion.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Which page?

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Sorry; just the net appropriations to the Department of Education.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Honourable member, that is not helpful. I will make a general comment. An awful lot of work is being done around attendance. I can talk about that here, but you are quite right that there is not a precise budget paper. Attendance is also reported on in the annual report. I think the committee is most likely going to hold—I do not know if I am speaking for it—annual report hearings; they normally do. That would be an opportunity to pursue that. There is a special piece of work that has been done in particular in Halls Creek around attendance, but, unfortunately, it continues to dog all governments—that is, how we can make sure, particularly in the remotes, that we properly and meaningfully engage Indigenous families and young people to stay at school.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: If you indulge me, chair and minister, I have just one question on this particular issue. I was in Fitzroy Crossing a couple of weeks ago and an educator did say the attendance is near 15 per cent at high school. I am not sure whether you are aware of that. I do not whether you want to comment. You do not have to.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Well, honourable member, I think a better place to have this conversation is when I have all the briefing papers in front of me and that will happen when we talk about attendance in the annual report hearings. There is not a line item in the budget.

The CHAIR: I take the point, minister. I think it was just a general comment on attendance.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, I have made a general comment. We struggle, have struggled for a long time, to properly and meaningfully engage Indigenous students and their families in attending school. I would like to say that it is much better than it is, but I am not going to sugar-coat it. It is difficult—difficult, difficult work.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Specific to the budget papers, page 375, the planning for the Derby District High School, \$20.9 million. To clarify for me, that does not appear to be in the budget—that \$20.9 million does not yet appear in the “Works in progress”. I assume that is not yet in the budget, just to clarify, and I assume that is just planning for a commitment; is that correct.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Are you asking about the announcement last year about moneys for Derby senior high school; is that what you are asking about?

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Yes. I did search for that item and could not find it. I assume this word “planning” for it is just an activity that is underway and there is no funding yet available. But could you clarify that for me, please?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is in the budget, on page 374, at the top, “Additions and Improvements to Primary Schools”, Derby District High School, \$20.9 million.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: My apologies. Thank you. Excuse me, sorry—\$20.9 million that does not seem—no, you are right. My apologies. While we are on that issue, if you could clarify in relation to the other senior high school. I know there is a sports hall for \$11.5 million—\$18.5 million. I did count those numbers; they did not seem to be consistent for the Hedland Senior High School, so I am just wondering if that sports hall is in the budget as well?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes; that is the allocation.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Thank you. That will do for now.

The CHAIR: We will go back. Can I ask a couple of general questions on service delivery, on page 365, and whether the minister can provide—I am sure you can—the average FTEs for teachers, EAs and AEIOs from 2017–18, 2019–20 and 2020–21 to date? It may need to be taken on notice.

Hon SUE ELLERY: This is a slightly different cut, but I expect this will assist the honourable member. Staff by category: teaching staff, 23 802; other support—I will see if I can find AEIOs and EAs separately—other support, which is where they will be, is 12 454; cleaners and gardeners, 3 197; administrative and clerical, 2 135. Other support is made up of: AEIOs, 363; mainstream education assistants, 2 663; special needs education assistant, 5 704; and others, 3 724.

[3.10 pm]

The CHAIR: Thank you. I just wanted to see whether I could get a breakdown of those three specific categories: teachers, EAs and AEIOs, from 2017–18, 2019–20 and 2020–21—the average number.

Hon SUE ELLERY: We will take that on notice.

[*Supplementary Information No C8.*]

The CHAIR: Also, average class sizes, primary and secondary, over those years from 2017–18 to 2020–21.

Hon SUE ELLERY: We will not have it over those years, I do not think, so we will take that on notice.
[*Supplementary Information No C9.*]

The CHAIR: Under that magnificent independent public school system, I am wondering whether the minister could tell me, first of all, the current number of public secondary schools and how many are IPS, and the current number of public primary schools and how many are IPS? While we are finding those figures—the minister might be able to add value to this—I realise that the number of schools that will ultimately be IPS is finite, because for some schools it is just not appropriate. Are we almost there now?

Hon SUE ELLERY: We pretty much are. There are 610 IPS.⁴ We do not have a split primary–secondary, so we will take that on notice.

[*Supplementary Information No C10.*]

Hon SUE ELLERY: We are looking at another intake. I do not know when that will start—next year, possibly. One of the things that I did change was to recognise that it is still the case that some of those non-IPS schools obviously have the highest need.

The CHAIR: Yes, that is right.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I have asked IPS principals to consider in their application process applications from people in the pool—they are not required to engage them, but I have asked them to consider them as part of the recruitment progress. I have taken no further steps than that.

The CHAIR: Have any schools reverted—that is, they have decided that the responsibility of being an IPS is too onerous?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I do not think so. There is a constant tension, as I am sure the member would be aware, when sometimes some school leaders express a view about the complexity of work that they are required to do.

The CHAIR: I am very aware of that.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Sometimes there is a point of tension between wanting autonomy and then actually having to do it.

⁴ A letter of clarification about this part of the transcript can be accessed on the committee webpage.

The CHAIR: Yes, accepting the responsibility. That is great. If I could just get those figures, that would be good. The minister is suggesting that we are almost there. If there is another intake, that would be good.

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is 610 out of what—823 or something?⁵

The CHAIR: Yes. That is good. We will revert to other questions. Do any other members of the committee have questions? Hon Jackie Jarvis, do you have any questions?

Hon JACKIE JARVIS: No.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: I take the minister to budget paper No 2, volume one, page 363, the total appropriations amount for education. How many liaison officers work for the Department of Education?

Hon SUE ELLERY: What is a liaison officer, honourable member?

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Apparently, according to WAtoday, last month there was a case of a 15-year-old who had had only three years of school. There are apparently 14 residential group homes owned by the Department of Communities and just 32 education service staff to ensure that children in care attend school. Are there liaison officers who work for the Department of Education in this setting?

Hon SUE ELLERY: We are not familiar with the title “liaison officer”. I do not always rely on WAtoday—the member does, but I do not—as a source of ultimate truth.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: That is why I am here, asking questions of the minister, as the expert in this field.

Hon SUE ELLERY: And I am trying to give it to the member. I am not familiar with the term “liaison officer”. There are participation officers, which might be what the member is referring to. I think we might have to take it on notice and go away and look at the context of the article to make sure we are giving the member the right information.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Before we do that, Mr Chairman, because I do not necessarily want that particular question taken on notice, can the minister indicate what is the participation officer, and how many of them are employed in our state?

The CHAIR: Just to clarify, you did not want that to be taken on notice?

Hon NICK GOIRAN: No.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am advised that participation officers are based in the regional offices. Their functions include making sure that those students who might be getting their education in a place other than a school—maybe they are at TAFE, or maybe it is part of the process of getting them re-engaged after they have been disengaged—stay at school beyond the age of 15. They have been in place for a long time, maybe 15 years or something like that. They were put in place when arrangements changed about students staying at school beyond the age of 15. That is what participation officers do.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: How many regional offices are there?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Eight.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: How many participation officers work in each of those offices? Is it one per office?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I do not have that information, so I would have to take that on notice.

[*Supplementary Information No C11.*]

⁵ A letter of clarification about this part of the transcript can be accessed on the committee webpage.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Does the minister know, as a former Minister for Child Protection, whether the Department of Education provides any staff who work in residential group homes?

Hon SUE ELLERY: No.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: In the regional offices, of which the minister said there are eight, and there are some participation officers, what like role is played in the metropolitan area?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Metropolitan north and south is a region.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Is one of the eight regions? Okay. Hence it would be interesting to find out how many participation officers are placed in the metropolitan region. Is one of the eight regions metropolitan?

Hon SUE ELLERY: North and south.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: There are two metropolitan regions?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: With respect to children in the care of the state, does the Department of Education track how many of them have completed 10 years of schooling?

Hon SUE ELLERY: We “track”, if that is the right word to use, every student, whether they are in care or not in care. Maybe if the member could give me a bit more context about what he is asking about.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: I suppose the context is that although ultimately, as a matter of law, children in the care of the state are the responsibility of the CEO of the Department of Communities, there has been talk in recent times, including by the McGowan government, of the need for this responsibility to be shared across all of government—the whole of government. In fact, one of the recent bills that we passed, the Children and Community Services Amendment Bill, gave the director general of Communities the ability to provide some form of direction so that other departments, including Education, would have to prioritise the needs of that particular child. In that context, I am wondering whether the Department of Education takes special attention to ensure that children in care have 10 years of education.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I think the honourable member would be aware of the requirement for children in care enrolled in public schools to have a documented education plan in place. That needs to be reviewed twice a year and copies provided to the child protection case worker. Other than that, it is not unusual for there to be case conferences around the particular needs of children in care in schools. That is where Education and Child Protection work kind of closely together, for example.

[3.20 pm]

Hon NICK GOIRAN: These education plans prepared for children in care—what role does the Department of Education play in the preparation or the delivery of that plan?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is done at school level, honourable member. There is not a central, kind of, bank of them, if you like, but it is done school by school.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: The Department of Communities, being the primary department responsible for these children in care, they would track whether each child has an education plan but not necessarily the Department of Education?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am advised that schools have to report that they have done a plan and that they have reviewed that twice a year. Honourable member, the Ombudsman, I am pretty sure, has done reviews from time to time over the years about the statutory requirement around health and education plans for children in care, so that is like an oversight mechanism as well.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Thank you. I will follow-up that homework out of session. Minister, further to what I was discussing earlier with respect to the 14 residential group homes, it is said that there are 32 education services staff who are involved with those 14 residential group homes. That concept of education services staff—that is not something that is familiar to the —

Hon SUE ELLERY: That language is not Department of Education language, so there may well be 32 in the Department of Education, but they are not called that. There may well be 32 in the Department of Communities—I do not know—who are called that. I think the safest thing to do, honourable member, is for me to ask the department to look at the article you referred to and then we can try to match that with the positions in the department.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: For the sake of clarity for this question on notice, Mr Chairman, the article is dated 9 September last year entitled “He is 15 years old but only had three years of school: How a Perth boy in care slipped through the cracks”. What we are wanting to know is whether these 32 so-called education services staff are employed by the Department of Education.

[Supplementary Information No C12.]

The CHAIR: Before we move on, because I know Hon Donna Faragher still has a number of questions and I have a few more, as does Hon Neil Thomson, because you have been such very good boys and girls, I am going to allow you some play time. We will have probably an eight-minute break. I will get the bells two minutes before.

Hearing suspended from 3.22 to 3.33 pm

The CHAIR: I will ask a couple of questions on the sensational changes that we now have for the senior secondary graduation—just a couple of figures as a matter of interest. I would be very interested to know how many students from when that implementation occurred, so in 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020, actually achieved a cert II or above from graduation for those years?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I think we might have it here. If we have got it, we will give it to you.

The CHAIR: At the same time—the number of students in Year 12.

Hon SUE ELLERY: The percentage of year 12 students with a VET certificate II or higher, I have got it from 2016 if that is helpful.

The CHAIR: Yes.

Hon SUE ELLERY: In 2016, it was 69.5 per cent; in 2017 it was 71.7; in 2018 it was 71.1; in 2019 it was 73.7; and in 2020 it was 75.4. In the second question you wanted the number of year 12 students for each of those years. We will take that bit on notice.

The CHAIR: Could we also have contained within that the number that graduated?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, I might add that last year, amongst all the doom and gloom, we had the highest rate of achievement of WACE certificate ever. Actually, I can give you those numbers, honourable member. The number of year 12 public school students in 2016 was 13 853; in 2017 it was 14 360; in 2018 it was 14 398; in 2019 it was 14 398; in 2020 it was 14 477. Do you want the WACE as a percentage or the raw numbers?

The CHAIR: Just the raw numbers.

Hon SUE ELLERY: In 2016 it was 11 052; in 2017 it was 11 424; in 2018 it was 11 586; in 2019 it was 11 618; and in 2020 it was 11 829.

The CHAIR: Sorry to be a burden. Could you just go through the percentage as well then, if you do not mind?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes. In 2016 it was 79.8; in 2017 it was 79.6; in 2018 it was 80.5; in 2019 it was 80.7; and in 2020 it was 81.7.

The CHAIR: That is great. Thank you very much.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Could I turn the minister to page 381, “User Contributions, Charges and Fees”, and then under fees, agricultural colleges. The minister might recall that I often ask a question around this time of year with regard to the agricultural farm provisions trust fund. There was, obviously, additional revenue that was taken as part of budget repair measures back at the end of 2017. I suppose my first question is—you might need to take this on notice, but I would like to know the funds that the department received as part of that additional take in the 2020–21 financial year.

Hon SUE ELLERY: While we are looking for that number, honourable member, you may or may not be aware, but the dividend was a four-year dividend. The dividend has ended.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: That was my next question, minister. I know that you had indicated that you would continue to monitor this, so that is good news to have that confirmed. Can I presume now that from 2021–22 going forward that has now been removed?

[3.40 pm]

Hon SUE ELLERY: Correct. The actual amount in 2020–21 was \$372 639.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Thank you. I now have some questions in relation to the school chaplaincy program, but whilst we are actually on that page, page 381, let me just come back to it now. It is the chaplaincy program, sorry, under grants and subsidies. My understanding is that the current partnership between the commonwealth and state with regard to the chaplaincy program is perhaps under review, or expired, or subject to further negotiation. Could I get some clarification with regard to whether or not those negotiations have commenced? Under (b) at the bottom, it does say that it will continue to 2022.

Hon SUE ELLERY: The national partnership on the national school chaplaincy program goes through to 2022. That is the current agreement.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: To the end of 2022, sorry, minister? Is it for the school year? I suppose this is the challenge if we are talking financial years versus school years.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Good question. It says “continue to 2022”. I do not know what point in 2022 that is. That agreement continues until the end of the 2022 calendar year.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Right, okay, so for the entirety of the year. Thank you for that. Chair, could I just ask, on that, when do negotiations commence again to continue that agreement beyond the 2022 school year?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am advised that in the federal government’s budget, the funding is allocated across the out years, but the jurisdictional split of the funding is not in that. I am advised that no formal negotiations have started. It is not anticipated that we will be arguing about whether; it is about how much Western Australia will get.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: All right. That is helpful. Thank you, minister. I have still got a couple of questions with regard to the chaplaincy program, so I will turn to page 363, under “Spending Changes”, “Election Commitments”, expanding the school chaplaincy service, which I, obviously, support. We were on a unity ticket with regard to that particular commitment during the election period, so it is good to see that it is in the budget. I just would like some clarification in relation to this. I am presuming that, as I look at it, this year, it is \$1.423 million, then it heads up to beyond \$4 million and continues on. I just want some clarification. I am presuming that it is graduated because, obviously, we need to have enough chaplains in the system to be able to deal with the

increased number of schools that will now, if they choose to, access the chaplaincy program; is that correct?

Hon SUE ELLERY: This is about having enough funds allocated for those schools that currently do not have a chaplain who want one. Now, it may well be there are two; it may well be there are 23. I do not know what that number will be yet. What the funding provides is to increase the total number of schools receiving full chaplaincy funding by 323 from 507 to 830 by 2024. Bear in mind, honourable member, this is a choice, so the schools choose whether they want this. They are kind of a nominal allocation to allow an annual increase in additional schools. In 2022, that would be for an additional 107; in 2023, for an additional 108; in 2024, for an additional 108, as well.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Okay, so it is graduated.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: That is understood; thank you for that. Then, in terms of access to funding, can I ask, just for clarification, for a school that currently does not receive any funding for a school chaplain, do they then have to come through the department or through YouthCARE or the nominated service provider? How does it work?

Hon SUE ELLERY: There are two ways that they can choose to participate. One is to use the panel. YouthCARE is a member organisation on that panel. The second is they can choose to source their own chaplain service direct, so with an organisation that meets the relevant criteria, which is about the qualifications that the person has to have.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Okay, thank you. Further to that, and I appreciate, as you say, obviously it is a voluntary system, if I can put it that way, so not all schools will necessarily choose to have a chaplain. But if in each of this financial year and the out years, if there are, I suppose, additional funds that remain—that is, remain unallocated—is it intended that that would obviously just go back into the department, or would there be opportunities for—as the minister would know, most schools want additional time for chaplains. Will there be capacity to increase the amount of funds that are available for individual schools to access additional time?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, I mean, that was not part of the election promise. Obviously, that was not part of the discussions with Treasury in the formulation of the budget, so any conversation about whether or not that was to happen would have to go through the normal budgetary process. So, no decisions have been made about that; no discussions have been had about that.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Okay, thank you. Then, as you indicated, obviously, there is, I suppose, a panel of service providers, YouthCARE probably provides the bulk of services, but there are others. Are you able to provide a breakdown of the funding provided by the department in 2020–21, expected 2021–22—that might be difficult, but certainly the previous financial year—for chaplaincy services, which includes the name of the service provider, the total amount of funding that they received and the schools that they delivered services to?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Honourable member, I will take it as a supplementary, but I am not sure how much detail we will be able to provide of the panel process and schools choosing their own, as well. I will take it as a supplementary but I just put the caveat on it, I am not sure how much information I can actually provide.

[Supplementary Information No C13.]

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Okay, thank you. If we could turn now to page 364, under “Partnering with Families, Communities and Agencies to Support the Educational Engagement of Every Student”, it is paragraph 5 with regard to the number of students diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder and reference to support and adjustments to ensure that students with disabilities can fully participate.

Minister, I suppose my question is perhaps more general with regard to students with disability and access to supports. I did ask a question of the minister on notice earlier this year with regard to enrolments at education support schools. I would like some clarification. I also asked what was the current enrolment capacity. I will say that when I received that response, perhaps unlike mainstream schools, where I was given an absolute figure, I was given a range, so, for example, Durham Road School had an enrolment of 225, but the capacity was somewhere between 162 and 260. Can I presume that you have given that range because, obviously, class sizes may depend given the severity or otherwise of the students?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes. Honourable member, it will depend entirely on the particular characteristics of the students.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Okay, thank you. That is what I thought, but I just wanted clarification on that. I would say, though, that certainly what has been put to me by a number of people is that a number of these schools are actually at or near capacity, and perhaps particularly I reference in and around the East Metropolitan Region and that northern corridor of the region, and schools such as Durham Road, Gladys Newton and Sir David Brand, as well. Can I just get some clarification with regard to how the department monitors that demand?

[3.50 pm]

Hon SUE ELLERY: Sure. There was a period of time when no new ed support schools were being built. Since we came into government, we have been trying to play catch-up. Someone might be able to find the number that we have committed to already. For example, Baldivis was a really high-growth area with lots of pressure so we made an announcement about that.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Sorry, just for clarification, was that a standalone education support school or an education support centre attached to a linked school?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Actually, it was both. Both versions were not being built. While people are finding me that information, it is something that the department is watching because we do want to make sure that we continue to provide services for those students, wherever they are. I have to say that we put in an extra, I think it was \$170 million in this budget, for students with disabilities. That is recognising that increasingly, parents are able to get diagnoses much earlier, but also recognising that, for a variety of reasons, there are still some students who will not get a diagnosis. Either the parents do not want to pursue getting a diagnosis or parents just do not. They are not making a conscious decision it is just that there are a whole lot of other things going on in their life that means they do not do it, or it is too difficult to pin down a diagnosis. We need to keep a watch on that and make sure we continue to increase both the funds to mainstream schools to ensure that they can be inclusive and inclusive effectively for those students with disability, but effectively for all the other students in the classroom as well, and ed support centres and ed support schools. I am going to see if we have some numbers on it. Of the ones that was announced as part of our COVID response infrastructure last year was education support at Canning Vale College. Facilities there were upgraded, because I am pretty sure they already had an autism program operating there, because I am pretty sure I visited it. Pineview, which opened this year, has a new education support hub. Joondalup Education Support Centre had a whole range of upgrades as well. South Bunbury Education Support Centre and West Coast Secondary Education Support Centre got upgrades as well. Just to double-check we have given you everything, I might take the question as a supplementary and if there is something we can add to that, we will.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: If you could, I would appreciate that.

[*Supplementary Information No C14.*]

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Further to that, I am specifically referring to education support schools in my next question, but it does cover both. With the one-line budget, I appreciate that these schools do get additional loadings and the like. One of the issues, as I understand it, and quite obviously so, is they have significant perhaps even more so additional costs with respect to staffing and requirements. A large proportion of the budget goes to staffing costs. A number of these schools are very old schools and have significant maintenance issues and the like. I am keen to understand when the department and/or the government did their last review with respect to funding requirements for these schools.

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is worth noting that those schools are staffed at a much higher staff-to-student ratio than mainstream schools. That is in recognition, obviously, of the greater need.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Understood.

Hon SUE ELLERY: All schools, including ed support schools, got additional funds as part of the additional \$200 million maintenance blitz last year, I think it was. In terms of a review, is your question about have we reviewed the student-centred funding model for the purposes of that category of school?

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Yes.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am not sure what was looked at in 2017–18, so I might have to take that part on notice and we will get back to you.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: If you could, that would be great. Thank you.
[*Supplementary Information No C15.*]

Hon NEIL THOMSON: I refer to works in progress on page 373. Under “Bob Hawke College Stage 2” there is \$24.4 million, running through to \$10 million and \$11 million. You would be aware of some of the concerns of the residents and parents in that area. Does the development there conform with state planning policy 2.4? That is the planning for school sites policy requirements.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Honourable member, all schools have to comply with the state government’s planning regime.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: So you are satisfied it meets the requirements. Have you consulted with the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage or your department in relation to the east Subiaco redevelopment that will result in the significant intensification of that site?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am aware of some of the views of some of people about the east Subi arrangements. Really, your question is about whether there has been engagement between the department and I think you asked about planning.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: DPLH, yes. Education and DPLH. Did the Department of Education have a say in the develop of that precinct plan?

Hon SUE ELLERY: The department provided comments to Development WA about the standard thing that the department says about schools, making sure that they are an inviting and safe operational environment, as the precinct delivers, but there is nothing unusual about that, honourable member. I am absolutely confident that the two schools in the area, because Perth Modern is there as well—Perth Mod and Bob Hawke will continue to flourish and that the Subiaco East plan will continue ahead as well. I am absolutely confident that those three can exist in peaceful and constructive cohabitation of that area.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Going to the other work in progress per Hedland Senior High School, which I mentioned earlier we identified where that was, so thank you for that. My understanding is that it might have been under construction with Pindan. Is that correct?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It was.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Has that been renegotiated now?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will find out the most recent information for you. The incomplete works were re-tendered as two separate packages. The completion of the new sports hall and the classroom building tender was—just checking we have announced all of this—awarded to ADCO Constructions. The contract for the school's welcome centre, the second part of that build, which provides ed support facilities, has been awarded to the local contractor, Pilbara Constructions Pty Ltd.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Did that process cost the Department of Education any money in terms of the net cost of the project?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I think there has been an increase. The budget increased from the original \$15 million to \$18.5 million to complete the remaining works.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: The other one I have relates again just to the general appropriation, net appropriation of \$4.2 billion. It comes back to this issue of violence in schools. Are you able to provide me a breakdown of the workers' compensation payments total—not individual, but total spend on workers' compensation for the last 10 years. Is that possible on notice? Can we do that?

[4.00 pm]

Hon SUE ELLERY: No. Honourable member, I think you would find, when you look to the annual report, which has already been tabled, that that may well be recorded in there. I think it is even—do not take this as gospel—but I think it goes across a number of years in the annual report. Can I suggest that you look at that first?

Hon NEIL THOMSON: I am wondering if the director general can provide the information. She might have that information available.

Hon SUE ELLERY: You are asking the question to me and I will give you the answer.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: I am asking you whether you could ask the director general about the costs.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am the minister and I am going to give you the answer —

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Yes, that is great.

Hon SUE ELLERY: — which is that we do not have the costs.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: What you are saying is you do not know —

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am saying we do not have it here. I think a useful thing for you to do would be to look at the annual report because I know that is where it is recorded. I will take it as a supplementary, but I cannot guarantee that I am going to give you 10 years' worth because I am not going to ask the department to allocate resources to do that. If it is easily obtainable —

Hon NEIL THOMSON: I would have thought —

The CHAIR: The minister has said that she will make every attempt to get as much information as possible. We will try and get the 10 years; if not, the minister will try to get whatever she can.

[*Supplementary Information No C16.*]

Hon NICK GOIRAN: On this line of questioning, minister, what is the amount that the Department of Education sets aside to provide to RiskCover for workers' compensation in the budget?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am advised the budget shows an increase, but we do not think we have the full amount so we will have to take that as supplementary.

[*Supplementary Information No C17.*]

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Sorry, the budget shows an increase —

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, but not the full amount, which is what the member is asking for. I will have to take that as supplementary

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Where is the increase shown in the budget?

Hon SUE ELLERY: If you look on page 364, three-quarters of the way down the table at the top of that page it says “Revision to RiskCover Insurance”.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Right; and then the budget estimate says just over \$5.8 million. You are indicating that that is a revision from the previous budget but it is not the full allocation.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Correct.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: But the full allocation could be provided on notice?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes.

The CHAIR: Which we have done. It is C17.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Earlier under “Works In Progress” we had Roebourne District High School. I come to the issue of the local intake area policy. I have been online and looked at the issues. There is a map but it is pretty much the metro area. There was some community concern from Wickham and there was some dialogue—you may recall—involving the local member Kevin Michel and a few comments that were made in the media in relation to that. Is there any proposal, once the works are completed at Roebourne District High School, to enforce the local intake area approach in terms of prioritisation of students from Wickham?

Hon SUE ELLERY: No. I must admit I was quite surprised at the tone of some of the commentary, which was expressing concerns that Roebourne District High might be so great that Wickham students might have to go there.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: It was parental issues.

Hon SUE ELLERY: That was the tone and I must admit I was quite taken aback by that. It will be a great school. There is no plan to change local intake arrangements —

Hon NEIL THOMSON: For Wickham.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Correct.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Okay—good.

The CHAIR: Before I go back, just with regard to the staffing profile—I forgot to ask this earlier, minister—are there any shortages anymore in any of the areas throughout secondary or primary?

Hon SUE ELLERY: You might recall that the universities made changes that took effect from 2017. They effectively went from a one-year qualification to a two-year and they are producing less teaching graduates, which is quite annoying, frankly. The department—as you would remember, I am sure—has in place a number of programs to make sure that despite that, we continue to have enough teachers in the respective areas that we need them. There are a number of supply sources that are being put in place to ensure that we have enough teachers. So we anticipate for 2021 to be, out of these sources—so graduates, we are anticipating around 700; Teach for Australia, around 50; Leap, which you would be familiar with, 320; a flying squad of around 127; teacher recruitment pools, just over 2 000; casual relief teacher pool, just over 2 200; and the public school teacher pathway, which is a program allowing masters students to work in their second year—it is a pilot now—will give us about 14. With all those measures in place, we are anticipating that we will have the teachers that we need but the universities’ decision back in 2017 was not helpful.

The CHAIR: But currently there are no shortages.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Correct.

The CHAIR: What about in specific, discrete areas like science et cetera—the traditional areas.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I think, to the extent that there is pressure right now, it is around relief teachers and that is just a function of closed borders. Yes, we could always do with more secondary STEM-related teachers, for sure, but the department has been working hard to make sure that we have got the teachers we need in the classrooms we need.

The CHAIR: So the pressure points, have they remained the same as they have been for a number of—like design and technology. Is that still a pressure point? And some areas of language?

Hon SUE ELLERY: D and T, science and maths.

The CHAIR: Okay, that is fine. Thank you very much.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Minister, at page 382 of the budget papers, volume 1, there is a line item there with respect to students at risk and it talks about a grant. Can you just provide some details about the nature of that grant for students at risk?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Honourable member, these are two historic grants made to Catholic Education and AISWA, which is the Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia, to assist them to provide support for students at educational risk. AISWA receives \$753 000 and Catholic Education receives \$520 000. That includes some funds for psychs.

[4.10 pm]

Hon NICK GOIRAN: So that is different from the psychology services grant that is listed immediately above?

Hon SUE ELLERY: No, it is separate, honourable member.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: So the students at risk grant does include the provision of psychologists?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It does, but it is separate from the other funding program where we fund and will increase the grants for school psychology services for Catholic schools and independent schools. It is in addition.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Right, so the capacity to provide psychologists in Catholic schools or independent schools under the auspices of AISWA is provided under two grants—one for the psychology services grant and the other for the students at risk?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Correct.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: How does the department “define students at risk”?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is a combination of a range of measures; attendance is one of them. Do we have an actual definition here? It would be a combination of things, honourable member.

The CHAIR: These are students at risk in mainstream schools? This is not different from the funding that is provided to CARE schools?

Hon SUE ELLERY: This is not CARE schools.

The CHAIR: No, I am aware of that, but this is for mainstream AISWA or Catholic Education schools?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Catholic Education uses those funds for retention and participation, including the key objectives of working with school communities to improve educational outcomes for students at risk. For Catholic Education, it is providing support for CARE schools, so it does include that, sorry; increasing educational attainment and engagement of Aboriginal and refugee students; successfully

transitioning students at risk into further education, training and employment; and working with other sectors to provide support for students at risk. The AISWA money is spent on curriculum support for independent schools in respect of teaching and learning strategies for students at risk, with a particular emphasis on e-learning and support for CARE schools.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Are the same sort of supports made available to students in public schools who are considered to be students at risk?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Absolutely.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: How is “students at risk” defined by the Department of Education?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is a combination of things, honourable member. It is about academic achievement and attainment, attendance, and emotional and social wellbeing. It is a combination of things. You would be aware, I am sure, that in secondary public schools they have student support services, for example, which is where those services sit to provide support for students at risk.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Is there a policy or procedure that guides the department with respect to students at risk?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, there would be several.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: So there is definitely at least one. What are those policies and procedures?

Hon SUE ELLERY: We would not have a list here, honourable member. I am happy to take that on notice.

[Supplementary Information No C18.]

Hon NICK GOIRAN: On the same page, 382, there is a table titled “Details of Administered Transactions” and the lines, “Supplementation Grants to Special Education Schools” and “Funding for School of Special Needs Medical, Mental Health and Sensory”. Why are these transactions administered rather than controlled?

Hon SUE ELLERY: This is funding that the department provides to non-government schools. What is it that you are particularly looking for?

Hon NICK GOIRAN: I am just trying to ascertain why the transactions are administered rather than controlled, and if the response is because they are provided to Catholic schools and non-government schools, then that is the response.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Payments to non-government schools have always been done by way of administered payment.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: If all administered transactions are listed here in this table at page 382, then by definition, all payments that go to AISWA and Catholic Ed are found in this table?

Hon SUE ELLERY: There might be some others that are not in here. For example, I was engaged in a conversation earlier with Hon Donna Faragher about negotiations on the universal access funds. The department receives those funds for four-year-old programs run in schools across WA, including Catholic and independent. It then passes on to the Catholics and independents their proportion of those funds. That is not reflected on page 382, but it is reflected in other parts of the budget.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: So when you say there might be some others, there definitely are some others, including the example you have given. Can you provide an exhaustive list, even if you need to take it on notice?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes.

[Supplementary Information No C19.]

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Still on page 382, halfway down the page there are details pertaining to the student residential colleges fund. One of the line items is “Other”. What is covered by that?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will find out for you. Honourable member, I do not have a list here, so I will take that on notice.

[Supplementary Information No C20.]

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Okay. I see there in the same table that it shows a shortfall in the closing balance for 2019–20. There is an explanation in the note under the table. How was the shortfall covered?

Hon SUE ELLERY: By the department’s cash balance, honourable member.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: But this is a special purpose account.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am advised that it was a timing difference between the years. It is not unusual to shuffle the money in that way.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Section 19(1) of the Financial Management Act 2006 indicates that special purpose accounts are not to be overdrawn without the Treasurer’s approval. Was the Treasurer’s approval sought; and, if so, on what date?

Hon SUE ELLERY: We will take that on notice, honourable member.

[Supplementary Information No C21.]

The CHAIR: Just to follow up on one of the areas that is of great interest to me, because I care a lot about these schools, and that is the CARE schools, they are for disengaged students and they perform a very good role, I have got to say. They have traditionally been funded to a high degree by federal governments of both persuasions, but the federal government decided to vacate this space to a large degree, and we picked up the tab. How is that funding model now? Are the feds still baulking at it?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is still majority funded by the federal government. The number of CARE schools is increasing, and CARE schools provide a really, really important function in education for those students who, for a variety of reasons, disengage. Sometimes CARE schools, including quite recently, get negative attention because of the behaviour of some of their students. I think most people do not understand that students attending CARE schools attend them for a variety of reasons, including psychological reasons and a whole range of things, not just behavioural issues. CARE schools are really important, and I will see if I can get the member some more information about the split.

[4.20 pm]

The CHAIR: I agree; every child has his strengths. It does not matter whether you are going in and out of juvenile detention or whatever, you have your strengths, and CARE schools provide an avenue for those kids, so they have my emphatic support. I am just interested to know, because I remember that when I first came in, in opposition, our federal Liberal government actually cut its funding. We ramped up and then somehow we won that election in 2008, so we actually filled the gap. It has been like that ever since, quite frankly. So I am pleased that the feds are still doing it. I know there are several discrete schools that are CARE schools and then some of those discrete schools have hubs—they have a variety of hubs, so they are not necessarily autonomous schools in their own entity. It is probably available on a website or something, but just for convenience, would I be able to get a list of the CARE schools and also the hubs, if we could?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes.

[Supplementary Information No C22.]

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I turn back to page 375. I am going to ask about the early childhood program. I appreciate that the minister has taken a question on notice in regard to those facilities,

but I am going to use the term “Early Childhood Program” under “Other School Facilities” to ask this question: does the government intend to increase the number of child and parent centres in the state?

Hon SUE ELLERY: There is not a plan to. We made an election commitment in 2017; I do not know that we did in —

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I recall that you did in 2017 I think for one in Ellenbrook, but I have not seen any since then.

Hon SUE ELLERY: No, there is not a plan for them in this budget. I mean, they do good work—there is no question about that—but, no; the answer to that is that there is no plan.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Further to that, for clarification—you may need to take this on notice—it has been told to me that with regard to access to the child and parent centres that are currently on site, that there are catchment areas, so students who might fall just outside the catchment area are not able to attend a centre. Is that correct? If it is, perhaps by way of supplementary information, could I get, I suppose, a map of the catchment areas for each of the centres that currently operate on school sites?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes; we will need to take that on notice.

[Supplementary Information No C23.]

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I go back to page 363; under election commitments is the line item “Expansion of Alternative Learning Settings”. I appreciate that the minister has already provided some information with regard to these. Can I ask, though, at this stage, have locations for these additional centres been identified?

Hon SUE ELLERY: That is work that is happening now. We have not announced the sites—actually, we will not. But there is work being done now to identify those sites. Honourable member, I know that you and I have had a conversation behind the chair about this and there are reasons why we will not announce the sites.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I appreciate that. My next question was going to be: appreciating that you do not like to provide the actual location, you have previously provided the region as to where they will be located, so, could I please have that detail?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes. There will be one in every education region. If I can narrow it down a bit, I will.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Further to that, how many additional alternative learnings centres will be delivered through this initiative?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is eight or nine, because we might do a split in a particularly big region, but the final decision has to be made on that.

The CHAIR: Can I just get some clarification: was there a commitment there to get some more information on child and parent centres; is that what you are saying?

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Yes, there was, with regard to child and parent centres. That was in terms of catchment areas.

The CHAIR: We have already done that; that is fine.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: But then I think there was perhaps additional —

Hon SUE ELLERY: I have also just given a commitment that I will provide some information about the general location of alternative learning centres.

The CHAIR: That is captured in that same supplementary information.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: But they are two different issues.

The CHAIR: Wait a moment, minister. Supplementary information C23 is the catchment areas, so C24?

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Can I clarify, the question relating to catchment areas related to child and parent centres. The next question that has been taken on notice relates to alternative learning centres.

The CHAIR: Alternative learnings centres is C24.

[Supplementary Information No C24.]

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Thank you. With regard to that, do we have a time frame as to when those additional centres will become operational?

Hon SUE ELLERY: They should be ready at the beginning of 2022.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I appreciate that when the first —

Hon SUE ELLERY: Sorry, honourable member, I am going to clarify that: five in 2022 and three in 2023.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I recall that with respect to the first four alternative learning centres, they commenced as a trial and a review was undertaken. That review did identify some shortcomings with regard to the centres and, I suppose, their establishment. Can you advise whether or not the matters that were raised in that review have been dealt with? I know there were some issues regarding location and appropriateness and those sorts of things, but there were some other matters as well. I am happy for the minister to take it on notice.

Hon SUE ELLERY: That review has certainly influenced the decisions being made about the new sites. I will have to take on notice exactly how we responded to the existing sites on those issues.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Could you? That would be appreciated.

[Supplementary Information No C25.]

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I now turn to page 364 under the significant issues impacting the agency. It relates to partnering with families, communities and agencies and it is specifically paragraph 3, with regard to the success of Aboriginal learners and working with families, caregivers and communities with respect to Aboriginal student achievement. I am seeking an update with regard to the Aboriginal girls' engagement program that was outlined in last year's state budget. I recall asking the minister a question—it might have been this year or towards the end of last year—with regard to that particular program. I was advised that at the time a procurement process to appoint a panel of service providers in 2022 to the deliver that program was underway. Are you able to advise me, I suppose, on the current status of this program and the appointment of the service providers?

Hon SUE ELLERY: The panel arrangement has been completed—as in the make-up of the panel—and it will commence from term 1, 2022.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Okay; thank you. With that, is it anticipated, then, that the service providers for these various programs will be determined next year? I just want clarity in terms of time frames.

Hon SUE ELLERY: We are in the procurement process now. We have not announced the membership of the panels. But from the start of next year, schools will be able to look at the panels and choose the program that suits their school.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Okay. If we can then turn, please, to page 368. I am going to ask this under “Public Secondary Education”. I think this might be the best place to put questions relating to specialised staff in secondary education, specifically the regional learning specialists and independent learning coordinators that are located within a number of regional and remote schools. My understanding from a previous answer from the minister is that originally I think that was for four years but has now formed part of the overall budget. Are you able to tell me what is the amount of funding that is allocated in the 2021–22 financial year and across the forward estimates to continue to deliver these specialists, or is it now all within the general budget?

Hon SUE ELLERY: There is certainly not a separate line item in the budget.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: No; that is why I am asking.

Hon SUE ELLERY: The actual cost for 2021–22 for independent learning coordinators is \$1.4 million; for regional learning specialists, it is \$1.5 million. For 2022–23, they are the same numbers, so it is actually \$1.498 million and \$1.505 million across each of the out years.

[4.30 pm]

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Thank you. Is the minister able to provide the total number of regional learning specialists and the total number of independent learning coordinators who are currently employed by the department?

Hon SUE ELLERY: There are eight regional coordinators and 10 ILCs.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Thank you. Just on that, can I also be given a list of the schools in which those positions are currently located?

Hon SUE ELLERY: This is ILCs. They are Hedland, Newman, Champion Bay, Central Midlands, East Kimberley, Narrogin Senior High, Dallyellup College, Tom Price Senior High School, Collie Senior High School, Karratha, North Albany Senior High School, Carnarvon Community College, Merredin College, Bunbury Senior High School, Manjimup Senior High School, Eaton Community College, Mt Barker Community College and Broome Senior High School.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: The last question in this section, with respect to the regional learning specialists, are those positions still placed at SIDE?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: With regard to that, which schools are these specialists allocated to?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I do not think we would have that information here, but I can take that on notice. It is basically as to how SIDE uses them.

[*Supplementary Information No C26.*]

The CHAIR: Are you moving to another area now, member?

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I am.

The CHAIR: I am just going to interrupt for a moment. Hon Dan Caddy has a question.

Hon DAN CADDY: I take the minister to page 370 again. In the asset investment program—I will not read it out—there is almost half a billion dollars for new facilities. Can the minister tell me how much of that is for primary schools specifically? Is that just to meet enrolment growth? What is driving that? Is that basically to catch up with population growth? I am interested in primary schools specifically and where they are.

Hon SUE ELLERY: While they are getting that information about the precise schools, enrolment continues to grow. I have to say that a function of COVID is that enrolment growth has slowed, but

enrolment growth continues; it is just that the rate of growth is not as fast as it once was. That is why we constantly have to be opening things up.

New schools opening and proposed to be established in 2022 are Shorehaven Primary School, Burns Beach Primary School, Riva Primary School, and Treeby. For 2023—these are planning names—West Swan Primary School, Landsdale South Primary School, Madora Bay Primary School, Ridgeview Secondary College stage 2—that is not a planning name—Wellard Village Primary School, and Yarralinka Primary School, which is an existing primary school, stage 2.

Hon DAN CADDY: River Primary School, minister, where is that located?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is Riva as in r-i-v-a, not River. Good question. That is in Harrisdale, a rapidly growing area.

Hon DAN CADDY: What proportion of that spending is for primary schools?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Good question. I will have to take it on notice.

[*Supplementary Information No C27.*]

Hon NICK GOIRAN: I take the minister to budget paper No 2, page 380. There is a reference to the department expecting to pay approximately \$2.9 million into the consolidated account. What is that for?

Hon SUE ELLERY: At where on that page is the honourable member looking?

Hon NICK GOIRAN: It is in the first part of the table, just above the words in bold, “Net cash provided by State Government”, the line “Receipts paid into Consolidated Account”. That is a negative figure. What is that nearly \$2.9 million for?

Hon SUE ELLERY: In 2020–21, the department sold lot 27 Bennett Springs Drive, Bennett Springs, which had been determined as being surplus to educational requirements. It sold it to a non-government school provider, and the department returned those funds to consolidated account.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: I refer to the spending changes listed on page 364. In particular, I am interested in note (a), which states, “Existing agency spending has been reprioritised to meet some or all of these costs.” Is the minister in a position to provide more information on how the existing agency spending was reprioritised to meet some or all of these costs?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Under the National School Reform Agreement, which is an agreement between the state and commonwealth government signed in 2018, we have to outline certain areas that those moneys would be spent on. For an element of that, so long as it is within the broad parameters of the agreement, the state has the discretion, if you like, to spend it on various things in schools. The commonwealth sets out the parameters within which those moneys can be spent, and that is what we have done.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: I refer to page 364 and the line “New Languages for Western Australian Schools”, which references note (a).

Hon SUE ELLERY: That was one of them.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Was that the only one?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I do not have a complete list here. I could probably take it on notice. Some of the additional money that went into students with disability has come out of that fund. As I said, the commonwealth set broad parameters. Some of the things that we were going to spend that money on under the agreement were very specific—we committed to spend it on various things. There were also additional funds where so long as the state spent the moneys within the parameters set by the commonwealth, it was up to the discretion of the state as to how those moneys were spent.

The CHAIR: Just to clarify, did you say, minister, that you would provide that list?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, because I do not have a list of all of the things.

[*Supplementary Information No C28.*]

Hon NICK GOIRAN: If the minister turns back to the previous page, page 363, because this is all under the heading “Spending Changes”, she will see that note (a) is used on a number of the items. Does that mean that is intended to be the list?

Hon SUE ELLERY: If it was that easy, that would be convenient for everybody, but it is not. That funds part of it, not all of it. We will take the rest of that on notice.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: The information that is going to come back on notice —

[4.40 pm]

The CHAIR: That will all be included under supplementary information C28.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: That is right. It is not a new line of inquiry. The information that is going to come back on notice is going to be the exhaustive list of which minister we can expect to see each of the items that currently have the notation (a) next to them, and in addition there will be some other matters.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Quite possibly; I do not have the list. Yes.

Hon LORNA HARPER: Minister, can I direct you to page 375 of budget paper No 2, volume 1. Around line 11 is “Administration Upgrade”. I note that there has been money allocated for administration upgrades. What schools will receive this funding?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Good question. Fremantle Primary School will get \$1.2 million, Kyilla Primary School will get \$650 000 and Morley Primary School will get \$630 000. The anticipated completion date for each of those is December 2022.

The CHAIR: What is the student population of Fremantle Primary School now? It was precariously low. It is just a matter of interest.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I do not think we will have it here. We could google it for you.

The CHAIR: I am pleased to see you have committed to a new admin block there. When I was minister I went down there and it was on a knife edge. Sorry, Hon Lorna Harper. I just wanted to interrupt there!

Hon LORNA HARPER: No, you are fine. I know you are reminiscing about your glory days!

The CHAIR: Every day is a good day.

Hon PETER FOSTER: I have a further question referring to page 370 of budget paper No 2, volume 1, regarding the asset investment program. Can you advise what the government is doing to address the need of improved internet bandwidth in our schools?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Thank you, this is a good question. COVID really highlighted for us the importance of this. The Department of Education funds bandwidth services for public schools, with bandwidth representing about 20 per cent of the total ICT budget. We started a project in partnership with our commercial partners at Telstra in January this year to further increase bandwidth to 97.2 per cent of public schools by an average of 20 times. The upgrades are being undertaken in three phases, scheduled to be completed by the end of 2022. As at 8 October 2021, 67 in scope have received their upgrade⁶. This is about 435 schools in the metropolitan area and 102 schools in regional areas. Honourable member, because of the region that you represent, you might appreciate that that

⁶ A letter of clarification about this part of the transcript can be accessed on the committee webpage.

2.8 per cent of schools that are not getting those high-speed scalable fibre-optic services are in some of the most remote areas in the state, and they are serviced by satellite technology. But we have not given up on trying to improve the technology available to them. Whenever I meet with Telstra, which have been great partners of the Department of Education and were very helpful particularly during COVID, I challenge them to continue to work hard to make sure we deliver that increase in bandwidth so schools, wherever they are, have access to that high-speed scalable fibre-optic service.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: If I could please go to page 365 under “Service Summary”, specifically line 3, “Regulation and Non-Government Sector Assistance”. I am interested in the differences in figures. The estimated actual is up at \$73 million and then it gradually goes down. Can I get an explanation of the reasoning for that?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am going to ask Mr Peckitt. My voice is starting to go. I might ask Mr Peckitt to provide the answer on this.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Hey, someone else is answering a question. This is cool!

Mr PECKITT: The main reason for the decrease in the out year is that this includes the universal access payment that is made to non-government schools. At the moment it is only in our budget for the 2021–22 calendar year, and once the agreement is finalised, it will be built into our budget.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: You would expect that would come up again.

Mr PECKITT: Yes.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Thank you for that clarification. That is understood.

If I could please go to page 371, and lines 23 and 24. I know questions were asked about the schools’ clean energy program and the solar schools program, but Can I just get some clarification. Can we first perhaps go to the schools’ clean energy program. You may have answered this before and I might have missed it, but just with regard to funding, how will the funds for this program be distributed to schools?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It will be by application, and schools will have to demonstrate what they want to spend the money on and why they have chosen that element.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I appreciate it would depend on the type of technologies they seek to —

Hon SUE ELLERY: There is a range. We might have that information here. There is a range of things that the money can be spent on. I will see whether someone can grab that for me. I was trying to get some more detail, but maybe I cannot get it. Broadly, it is solar panels, virtual power plants, which are batteries, and then there is a range of smaller elements that might assist schools to save energy, but are less sexy than big infrastructure like solar and VPPs. I am seeing whether I find the list. It includes things like LED lighting and stuff like that.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Perhaps we could take supplementary information on the full range. I appreciate there might be some that you might not have.

[Supplementary Information No C29.]

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Is it anticipated that there will be an upper limit to the funds they can access or seek through the grant program?

Hon SUE ELLERY: The provisions are really still being made, so the design, if you like, of the program is not complete yet. We would not want one school taking up all the money. We will have to work that out, basically to really maximise the spread. In a sense, some of that will happen naturally, because the point I made earlier was that some schools, by nature of the pitch of the roof, are not

going to be able to have solar. Equally, with the virtual power plants, there are specific geographic lays of the land around school matters. They can make a bit of noise, so obviously we do not necessarily want them right up against the fence of a next-door neighbour. There are going to be some constraints on what schools can take, so all of those things will have to be balanced.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Based on what you are telling me, essentially you are still working out the guidelines and grant application process with regard to the initiative?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Is it intended to commence from the 2022 school year; or, if not, when?

Hon SUE ELLERY: That is the intention. We have a hardworking crew here!

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I turn to the solar schools program. I think you have partly answered my question, but I will just confirm. I understand that essentially the particular program referred to here is offered to schools in the Pilbara and Kimberley regions.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Correct.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: The question that has been put to me is about metropolitan schools. I presume that metropolitan schools will be able to seek funds through the new schools' clean energy program.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Correct.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I want to clarify, was there any funding allocated beyond 2022–23 for this solar schools program? I just want to get that back in front of me, sorry.

Hon SUE ELLERY: No, honourable member, not at this point.

[4.50 pm]

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I have got it written here but I do not have the page number, but I think that is the case. So is it not?

Hon SUE ELLERY: No.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Is there a reason for that?

Hon SUE ELLERY: No, there is not. Not particularly. I will just check. Essentially, because there is a smaller number of schools in the Kimberley and the Pilbara, it is probably that we can achieve the whole program in that period of time.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: That is understood; thank you.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Just following on from my honourable colleague, solar schools program—is the procurement in relation to the installation of panels all managed by Horizon Power? This is the Kimberley and the Pilbara I am talking about.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, Horizon is the sole procurement provider for that program. Yes.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: The schools or the education department have no involvement in the actual contracting in relation to that aspect?

Hon SUE ELLERY: There will be an arrangement between the department and Horizon.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: I have had some discussion in the area. There seems to be some concern about the competitiveness of that process. We as members of Parliament always talk to people and there is concern about the pricing structure that has been proposed, so I do have a couple of technical questions. One is the connection fees that schools pay. Now, I have heard that, for example, schools could be paying up to \$9 000 a month for a connection fee and possibly as part of

this contract it could be around 7¢ a kilowatt an hour that we are talking about. These numbers may not be accurate, but I think the question is not around the issue—the alternative energy space is moving very quickly and the opportunity to get value for money by having a more competitive range. Has the Department of Education actually had a look at how we could make sure that program is competitive?

Hon SUE ELLERY: This is a very specific election commitment about Horizon. So, that is locked in. I might suggest to the honourable member, I am happy when you get issues like that, if you want to speak to me directly or email my office directly or just grab me behind the chair or whatever, I am happy to pursue those things, and we can do that really quite quickly.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Thank you. I appreciate that. That would be excellent, and I will follow up on that.

Hon DAN CADDY: Minister, moving down the same page, 371, at paragraph 28, it says that the stage 2 building has commenced at Bob Hawke College—obviously, a fantastic new school with an exceptional principal in John Burke. I did a tour of it just recently. Can you tell me where that is at and what the timing is around that as far as not just the structure, but bringing on the additional years of students?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, I can. So, the way that it works when we start a new school is that sometimes we do it this way, other times we do not. With this school, not an unusual practice has been to take on year by year. The first year they started with year 8s.⁷ The second year, the next lot of year 8s came in, and the theory behind that is that cohort of students kind of has ownership of the school and they progress up and you are not constantly bringing new cohorts of students in. That is not an unusual way to do. Quite often, you would appreciate as the parent of a young man, that parents do not want to disrupt their students' schooling in secondary school, so it is not unusual for us to do it in that way. In terms of the timing, ultimately, the stage 2 arrangements will see classrooms double the school's current capacity and create space for some 2 000 students. So, it will be facilities to provide spaces for students to rehearse and showcase their creative talents, performing arts centre, dance and visual arts studios, music rooms and two state-of-the-art media rooms. I am just trying to see the time line—the start of the school year is 2023.

The CHAIR: Probably one more session, so who wants to take that?

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Yes, please. In budget paper No 2, volume 1 at page 363, there is discussion there about an \$11 million increase over the forward estimates for school psychologists, which is, of course, a welcome addition to the budget. Has work been done to ascertain where these extra psychologists will be placed?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, it has. I have seen a list. So, certainly the allocations have been worked out for next year. I do not know if we have announced them. So, if we have not announced them, I am not going to give you a commitment to provide that. If an announcement is made in the time period before which we have to lodge answers, then I am happy to do that. I am happy to take that on notice. But the caveat is if they are not announced, I am not able to provide it.

The CHAIR: The conditional commitment is C30.

[*Supplementary Information No C30.*]

Hon NICK GOIRAN: That is in respect to where the psychologists will be. You have indicated some work has been done. What is the criteria that is used to determine where the psychologists will be

⁷ A letter of clarification about this part of the transcript can be accessed on the committee webpage.

allocated? I am particularly mindful of students who have suicided and whether those schools get some form of extra priority perhaps, some type of criteria in that respect?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It will be based on need and an assessment has already—so it will be a combination of things: ICSEA, which is a measurement of socio-economic status, size of the school but also other elements, so whether or not there has been highlighted a particular issue around student mental wellbeing.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: So those elements, there is some form of criteria. Is there a documented list of the criteria that is used to make these decisions?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It will include those elements, but, honourable member, it is a bit of a balancing exercise, so we will also take into account making sure we have the right regional spread, so it might be an ICSEA level is captured here but we might be slightly above or below that ICSEA level in another area because it is about the geographic spread as well. It is a balancing exercise. It is not a kind of pure scientific—it has to be these criteria —

Hon NICK GOIRAN: It is not a formula.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Correct.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: I understand it is not a formula, but is there a documented list of criteria that is used to do this balancing exercise?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will give you the criteria.

[Supplementary Information No C31.]

The CHAIR: Is there still a flying squadron of school psychologists?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, there is.

The CHAIR: How big is that?

[5.00 pm]

Hon SUE ELLERY: I do not have an actual number of the constant number in the flying squad, but as required. If, for example, there is a suicide, resources will just be pooled and psychs will be sent.

The CHAIR: I know; I remember this squad did go around exactly for that targeted discrete need.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: If I can turn to page 372, under “Other School Facilities”, paragraph 47 is regarding transportable classrooms. The minister always used to have a view on transportable classrooms when she was shadow minister, and now we are seeing them continue to increase.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Now I think they are beautiful!

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Nonetheless, I just put that out there. Again, this may need to be taken on notice, or maybe not. What is the total number of transportable classrooms currently owned by the department and are they all currently allocated or located on a school site?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will take that on notice, honourable member.

[Supplementary Information No C32.]

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Perhaps, again, this will also need to be taken as supplementary. Are you able to advise how many requests the department received from schools for a transportable classroom in the 2020 calendar year and the 2021 calendar year to date?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I might be able to; I do not know. If I can, I will. I would make the point, though, that sometimes schools request transportables for things that are beyond what transportables are meant to do.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I appreciate that.

Hon SUE ELLERY: A request does not necessarily mean that it is considered an actual need as opposed to a “nice to have”.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Yes, and I appreciate that. I suppose, therefore, my further question again that perhaps could be taken on notice is: of those requests, how many were denied?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Sure. If we are able to, I will.

[Supplementary Information No C33.]

The CHAIR: With that, we will just conclude this hearing. I thank everyone for their attendance today, particularly the witnesses.

Members, as you would be aware, you can submit remaining questions, and that needs to be done through the electronic lodgement system, which will close at 5.00 pm on 29 October 2021, so get your questions in.

Witnesses, the committee will forward the uncorrected transcript of evidence, with questions taken on notice highlighted, as soon as possible after today’s hearing. Responses to questions on notice are due by 5.00 pm on 17 November 2021. Should you be unable to meet the due date, please advise the committee in writing as soon as possible before the due date. The advice is to include specific reasons why the due date cannot be met.

Aside from that, thank you very much for your attendance today. It has been very much appreciated. Thank you.

Hearing concluded at 5.02 pm
