

# **EDUCATION AND HEALTH STANDING COMMITTEE**

## **INQUIRY INTO CHANGES TO THE POST-COMPULSORY CURRICULUM IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

**TRANSCRIPT OF EVIDENCE TAKEN  
AT PERTH  
WEDNESDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER 2005**

### **SESSION TWO**

#### **Members**

**Mr T.G. Stephens (Chairman)**

**Dr E. Constable**

**Mrs D.J. Guise**

**Dr K.D. Hames**

**Mr J.N. Hyde**

**Mr T.K. Waldron**

**Mr M.P. Whitely**

**Hearing commenced at 10.18 am**

**THOMSON, MRS SUSAN LEE**

**Secondary Teacher, Kelmscott Senior High School, examined:**

**SZOTA, MR GABE**

**Head of Department, Society and Environment Faculty, Kelmscott Senior High School, examined:**

**D'ROZARIO, MR PAUL CLIFFORD**

**Secondary Teacher, Kelmscott Senior High School, examined:**

**The CHAIRMAN:** This committee hearing is a proceeding of Parliament and warrants the same respect that proceedings in the house demand. Even though you are not required to give evidence on oath, any deliberate misleading of the committee may be regarded as a contempt of Parliament.

Have you completed the "Details of Witness" forms?

**The Witnesses:** Yes.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Do you understand the notes attached?

**The Witnesses:** Yes.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Did you receive and read an information for witnesses briefing sheet concerning giving evidence before Parliamentary committees?

**The Witnesses:** Yes.

**The CHAIRMAN:** We will ask a series of questions. Feel free to field them between yourselves. Your submission has reference to the proposed OBE system. You have stated that it is becoming indecipherable to teachers as a result of being continually changed. Can you highlight to the committee the changes you believe have been made and the effect the changes have had on your school community? Who would like to field that question? Pass on it if you wish. Stay silent if you wish.

**Mrs Thomson:** I am specifically coming from the lower school area, which is, obviously, where we have been trying to implement it for, in my case, eight years but, in some schools, 10 years. We originally were given a set of outcomes to work with in Society and Environment which are very difficult to understand. I do not know whether any of you have actually seen any of the S and E outcomes. We have brought some long if anyone is not familiar with them, particularly the time continuity and change.

**The CHAIRMAN:** We will have that tabled now.

**Mrs Thomson:** We have tried to put them into teacher speak firstly, I guess, and then kid speak, because we do not believe that is how they are structured. They are very broad. For primary school teachers that are not experts in certain areas, we do not believe they are workable in many cases. What has now happened is that, after believing for probably the past three or four years that, particularly, the S and E ones would be changed so that they would be more readily understood, we have had a new set of outcomes given to us. But, unfortunately, the language has not changed. Basically, the only change that has happened is that the pointers, which were there previously to give teachers perhaps an indication of what they might include as content, have disappeared. I

believe one of the reasons for that was that primary school teachers struggling with areas they were not familiar with were using the pointers as specific content, so kids were doing the same. Aboriginal studies is a good example; the pointers appear in all the levels in primary school. My son, for example, has studied Aboriginals for the past four years as his S and E. The new outcomes do not give us any more specifics to work with as far as we are concerned. They are too broad. Gabe will speak to the fact that the idea of outcomes as we understood it was that it was to be a continuous education between kindergarten and year 12. Now that we are getting the courses of study in upper school we are finding that, in fact, the S and E outcomes are not continuous. They are not the same and they do not continue into the courses of study.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Is that enough on the topic or does anyone else want to add to that?

**Mr Szota:** Could you repeat the question please?

**The CHAIRMAN:** It was in reference to your own submission where you stated that the system had become, in your words, indecipherable to teachers. You talked about the difficulties of continual change. You stated that this was having the effect of increasing the level of difficulty for teachers and the school community. I asked you to highlight particular aspects of the changes and examples of the impact on your school community. If you believe that has been adequately dealt with by Mrs Thomson, you need not add anything.

**Mr Szota:** I had an opening statement in the first item -

**The CHAIRMAN:** I might ask you to use that as a closing statement.

**Mr Szota:** In that opening statement, there were three aspects that I looked at. One was the programming of the actual outcomes-based education, which is Society and Environment. As Sue said, the pointers were taken by people. The main fact is that different schools have been doing it differently. It has been left to teachers to work out between themselves in their own time what exactly the common elements are. I spent meeting after meeting with HODs - heads of departments - from the area I was teaching in before, which is in Pinjarra. We met quite frequently. All of us came back with a different look of what the program would look like. It makes it very difficult to swap ideas when we come back with a different thing. There was no direction given to us in terms of what exactly we should do, so every school did something different in terms of programs and in terms of tasks - even something simple like how do you write a task and what does it look like and what are the things you need to put on a task sheet. I actually provided a sample of the before and after. It is one of the last pages in the submission. It is a sheet on vulcanism. It should be the last sheet in the package. The front of that explains how we set the task on volcanoes in previous years, before outcomes. My handwriting states "unit curriculum". The flip side shows the same task but written in an outcomes framework. If you notice the criteria down the bottom, it is unfriendly for the students. We have worked very hard to make it as friendly as possible. That is one of the issues. Nobody knows how to set a task. We have all been trying to do it as best we possibly can. In the long run, the kids have not suffered because of our attempts, but we wonder if we are doing the right thing. We are constantly wondering whether we are doing the right thing and if it is good enough and whether we can do it better. We then get a new outcomes statement saying this is the way we should do it. It is almost like *Life of Brian* where people are following different things: the gourd, the shoe - we are not quite sure what to follow now.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I will continue my questions. In reference to the Society and Environment outcomes, you have touched on that issue. In your view, they are complex and obstructionist. It is stated in your submission that the system is not ready for the proposed OBE change. Do you have anything further to say on that point as to what are the major deficiencies in the system's capacity to cope with these changes?

**Mr D'Rozario:** I can make a few references to that. Basically, I will give the lower school perspective. We have an example of a descriptor which they call "investigation, communication,

participation". The descriptor has a lot of long-winded sentences. We find that, in order to assess that one piece of work, we need to look at all the different descriptors for each level. At the end of the marking of one student's piece of work, we would have looked at the descriptors for level 3, level 4, level 5 and so on. What we have done is just marked one piece of work. A teacher would have 90 students but, if he did not have upper school students, he would have 150 students. The amount of work that goes into trying to get that right, as Gabe mentioned, is enormous. In terms of the upper school as we see the changes coming through, I will give you an example of a history course that I am familiar with. In the year 11 course, for example, a class would have 25 students and each student would have four different areas of unit of focus. For example, if five students were doing 1B, which is a level 4/5, the teacher would have to cater for "power and authority", which is the recommended focus content. If we had another group of students doing 2A, which is level 4/5, the unit is "historical movements", and so on. 2B is "conflict and resolution" and 3 is "ideas, beliefs and values". We are very concerned that a teacher will have to come up with programs and the right courses of study to cater for all those areas of study.

[10.30 am]

We have to mark those tasks that cater to each of those areas. We will have various levels of students in a class and the teacher will be delivering various courses of study and marking them. We have not been given any direction at this point in time for these changes. It is a very great concern.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I refer to professional development provided to date. In your submission you expressed the view that it is inadequate. Have the additional allocations of professional development allayed some of your concerns?

**Mrs Thomson:** No, not having just attended our first PD. We have just attended our first making consistent judgments for lower school in society and environment and, for me, it is eight years down the track to find out what a level 4 is. I came away extremely disappointed that some of the key questions we put on that day were unanswered; for example, how many pieces of work we should look at for a student in order to determine whether the outcome has been achieved. The professional answer on that day was, "What do you think?" That is consistently the information that we are being given. As far as I am concerned - and Gabe and Paul may feel differently - unless there is a great deal of change in the amount of information that we will be given at the PD, then no.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Your criticism is of the existing system as it impacts on compulsory years of education.

**Mrs Thomson:** If we get similar PD for courses of study - having spoken to English teachers who have now undertaken their five days for their course of study next year, it would appear they have been given no more guidance than we have been given so far. Spending that money and giving us five extra days next year would seem to us at this point not to be very helpful at all.

**Mrs D.J. GUISE:** You are indicating that the quality of the professional development on your first day was somewhat less than what you expected.

**Mrs Thomson:** I do not think we came away with the information we thought we would from that day; in fact, I am sure we did not.

**Dr E. CONSTABLE:** How many members of staff are there in your department?

**Mr Szota:** Fifteen.

**Dr E. CONSTABLE:** So 15 people will be doing five days next year?

**Mr Szota:** It depends. We have expertise areas - we have people who are economists, people who are historians.

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**Dr E. CONSTABLE:** Yes, but they will be doing five days of PD?

**Mr Szota:** Yes.

**Dr E. CONSTABLE:** Will you be required to find relief teachers?

**Mr Szota:** I believe that is funded. We have been told it will be funded.

**Dr E. CONSTABLE:** How easy will it be to find those relief teachers and how disruptive to year 11 and 12 students will that be?

**Mr Szota:** I guess there will be three or four of us going at any one time. If you multiply that by 15 people, it is 15 times five days. Nevertheless, it will not all be on a particular day, whereas with the current PD we thought we would go out on the same day. We had a day where the deputy noticed that there were 30 staff absent out of a staff of 120.

**Mrs Thomson:** The English staff found it a big problem this term because they have been away from their upper school classes for their five days of PD and that has caused numerous problems. We have had our deputy stand up and ask people to please do a relief.

**Mr D'Rozario:** It has been difficult for staff. We have had to redesign courses. Relief teachers do not have access to books and we have had to photocopy information. A lot of photocopying and planning has been necessary to provide that.

**Mr T.K. WALDRON:** Are you concerned about the effect that has on the students or is it minimal?

**Mr Szota:** Like us, they are creatures of habit and they like to know exactly where they are going and what they are doing. The effect is never minimal. Even on return from being absent when you are ill, there is a list of things the relief teacher has written about what the kids have or have not done. The kids at Kelmscott are great, but they have to get used to a new face.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Do you want to say anything more about the nature of the penalty that you indicate will be the experience of smaller metropolitan and regional schools as a result of these changes?

**Mrs Thomson:** I come from a country background and a very small country high school. I think what will happen with courses of study taught in country high schools is that they will become very limited. I know they are limited now, but I can see them becoming even more limited, particularly in the maths and science areas, otherwise teachers will find, as Paul suggested earlier, a number of different courses of study will need to be taught within the one class. Upper school teachers in country and sometimes smaller metropolitan schools will be asked to teach different courses with different content to different students at different levels and at different rates - all in the same class. It is going to kill them.

**The CHAIRMAN:** To some extent does that not happen now; for example, in the field of English?

**Mrs Thomson:** I will take the high school that I went to - Mount Barker Senior High School. When I went to the Mount Barker Senior High school you did English; at that time it did run English literature. I guess now it offers senior English and English. English literature is not offered. It compensates for that by perhaps running two maths courses instead of three.

**Mr T.K. WALDRON:** In the schools I am familiar with, the difference between what is happening now and what will happen is that not only will different subjects be taught, but they will be taught at different levels.

**Mrs Thomson:** Yes, and, as it is set out under outcomes, probably at different rates as well. The kids are supposed to be taking a course at their own rate.

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**Mr D'Rozario:** Those students who are at levels 4 or 5 and who do not plan to go to university will say they do not wish to proceed further to levels 6 or 7 - their aim is not to go to university. We will have probably half a dozen students who will be achieving at levels 6 or 7 and we will have to try to push them along while the other students will say they are not interested in doing the remaining tasks. They have a point: why study for higher levels of achievement when they are not planning to go to university?

**The CHAIRMAN:** Is there any aspect of the changes that you support?

**Mrs D.J. GUISE:** If I can turn that around - tell us what you think is so great about the current system as you seem to be fans of it and I think it sucks. I would be very interested to hear what you think is so great about the current system versus any change.

**Mr Szota:** To be honest, it is more a case of the changes leading to the same end result in a similar way, except we are putting the outcomes over the top of it. I have written down that there will still be a tertiary entrance rank and tertiary entrance aggregate. So we will put all of these new tasks into an outcomes framework on new courses which involves a minimum of five years. We will be looking at year 11 in 2007 and while we are taking year 11 to read different courses we will be trying to prepare year 12 at the same time. The kids are okay at this time. By the time we have made these changes, the end result will be that we still have a tertiary entrance score and TER. It will be somehow moderated and it will be a common exam that we have not seen yet. It may come out clean from the wash, but we have not seen a copy of that exam. Why make those changes if the end result will be exactly the same rank order, which cannot be done under an outcomes system? We do not fine grain in lower school, but in upper school they are talking about fine graining. That means that there are nine levels and there is a year and a half for every level. We mentioned in our submission that currently in the lower school we are finding that the kids are around one or two levels. For example, the year 8 kids are getting one or two grains. They used to have five grains and now they have one or two. It would be similar in the upper school, and we will have to fine grain that to have grades within a grade or levels within a level. A magic formula will add that up, which is exactly what we are doing now. There is no change to what we do, so what is the point of going through the process?

**Mrs Thomson:** And we are going through the process without knowing exactly what it is we are supposed to be doing. S and E has a wonderful syllabus and has had for 20 years. We know exactly what we are supposed to teach and within that there are allowances for teachers to take on their own interests and look at things kids want to do. In the end, all of us teach outcomes and always have done. Down the track we want kids to demonstrate they have certain understanding, knowledge and skills.

**Mrs D.J. GUISE:** Now you sound like a fan.

**Mrs Thomson:** That is not changing. We have always done that. Now we have statements that to many of us do not make any sense and we have nothing to go with it - no content or guidelines.

**Mr T.K. WALDRON:** At the beginning you referred to understanding it and having it in teacher speak and student speak. Is that one of the major issues? If you had more guidelines to tell you what you should and should not do would you understand it better? Do you think the problem members of the public have with it is that they do not understand?

**Mrs Thomson:** Absolutely. I am a parent as well. I have spent time looking at outcome learning areas that I am not familiar with and I do not understand their statements any more than I understand the ones I am working with.

**Mr T.K. WALDRON:** If that were changed and put in simple speak -

**Mrs Thomson:** With a syllabus.

**Mr T.K. WALDRON:** Yes, and with tighter guidelines, would you accept it?

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**Mr D'Rozario:** We would come back to the system we have now with the descriptors.

**Mr T.K. WALDRON:** We go around and come back.

**Mrs Thomson:** Yes.

**Mr Szota:** More importantly, giving grades and quartiles cannot be done under an outcomes system. We do not mark a piece of work out of five or 10. We are told, "Here are a range of things a student can do in level 4," and to give the kids opportunities to demonstrate they can do it. Level 4 covers 75 per cent of the kids. How do we come up with a grade for that? The formula given to us in the *Sunday Times* tells us there will be quartiles. It is difficult to work out how the formula is accurate. We have not been given a quartile formula yet, but we cannot come up with a quartile for a student unless we mark out of 100 or whatever it happens to be. It is difficult to see how you can impose grades and quartiles on an outcomes-based system.

**The CHAIRMAN:** With the retention rates in Western Australia relatively grim in comparison with other jurisdictions, do you have suggestions about what should be done to improve retention rates in our schools? One of the reasons that motivates this change is to try to respond to the statistical reality; that is, if you like, the human tragedy of retaining kids in the schools. This was a systemic response to that. Do you have an alternative response to this?

**Mr D'Rozario:** In lower socioeconomic areas there are students who come up to year 10 who are ready for apprenticeships and who want to look into other areas. Unfortunately, with the compulsory schooling that has been introduced, we will have students still sitting in classes basically saying they would rather be out there learning a trade and developing along those lines. That area needs to be looked at rather than putting them in an area and making them believe they are capable of going to university. They must be given other options.

**Dr E. CONSTABLE:** I am trying to get a handle on how this new post-compulsory course will affect less able students and how they will fit into it. Do you have any thoughts on that?

[10.45 am]

**Mrs Thomson:** Less able students will probably still take the same subject areas. For example, kids who have been VET students in various schools will do childcare courses; the boys might do the manual arts courses and those sorts of things. Those kids are not going to uni anyway. It doesn't matter what we put in front of them, because the majority of them are not going to uni, first, because they do not want to and, second, because they are not at the level that will get them to university anyway. We have courses that cater for those kids. They do a VET course or SWABL courses. They spend several days out in the work force each week. The courses of study will have to be designed by teachers in those areas so that kids still have those opportunities, so that when they get a job or apprenticeship, they will be able to leave school at that stage. In the meantime, to bring some of those courses to the levels at which they need to be in order to be comparable with subjects such as history, geography or any of the maths courses, some of the kids who currently get through VET courses quite well will, I think, struggle under the courses of study.

**Dr E. CONSTABLE:** Why do you think they will struggle?

**Mrs Thomson:** We are finding that some of our year 10 students are working perhaps at level 3 or 4. Not terribly many of our students would be working much higher than that or working at level 5, yet the courses of study begin at level 4.

**Mr T.K. WALDRON:** Are you saying that there is a gap that they have to jump?

**Mrs Thomson:** There is. There is a gap for them in order to get into it. One thing I pointed out in the submission is that we do not think that those subject areas or courses of study can be made equivalent across the 50 courses of study. I do not know how that can be done. I know that lots of people have made the same comments to you; that is, how do you make level 8 maths equivalent to level 8 childcare or media or any of those sorts of subjects?

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**Mr Szota:** It comes back to what I said before. One difficulty with the change is that they have come up with a system to provide fine graining and then the marks will be added together. Again, in terms of an outcomes framework, in lower school we are being told that there are seven outcomes in society and environment and that we must report on each of those seven outcomes. In upper school we are told that we will fine grain that. We will add the outcomes of three or four different things, put them together into one subject, come up with a level for that one subject and then add those levels to other subjects. That is exactly what we do now.

**Mrs D.J. GUISE:** You will be pleased to hear that Professor Andrich is working on that for the Curriculum Council, so that might ease some of your concerns. I will outline to you something that was put to us in terms of the benefits of the new system, because I would like your opinion, particularly since it hits on the ability of what we might consider to be lower achieving students to approach things in a different way that will get them further forward. It was put to us by Mr Nelson as part of a submission last week that the new Western Australian certificate of education is much more inclusive than the former certificate. An example is that under the current system, a student is required to achieve eight Cs, four of which must be at level 12. In the new system, there is no such thing, as year 11 or 12 students perform their first, second or third year or whatever. That takes away the requirement to achieve, say, four Cs at year 12, which means that that could free up the situation for the lower ability students. If, under the new WACE, up to eight of the 20 courses can be endorsed by the Curriculum Council, students will be able to achieve in other activities that will get them a score and that will count towards the completion of the certificate. I will give an example. The position that was put to us is that to obtain the WACE requires an average of level 4, but if students are achieving level 3 in some subjects and level 5 in others, they will pick up some of the areas. One concrete example was given in terms of integrated science. For example, a lower ability student and a teacher could address the context of issues. It could be chemistry with home soil analysis or forensics or whatever. At an agricultural college, a student could study environmental education, so there are many different flexible approaches that would equate to the unit score and would give the lower ability students a chance to lift their levels by comparison. They might be at level 3 in one subject and level 5 in another, so it will even out. It has also been put to us that there would not be a diminishing in the VET courses that have opened up opportunities. Do you have an opinion on that?

**Mrs Thomson:** My opinion is that that currently happens. A grade of D in one subject is evened out by a B in another. I do not think that that really makes terribly much difference in terms of kids graduating, which is really what you are talking about; that is, getting the certificate of education. The graduation rates for high schools are pretty good. I mean, I think Kelmscott had a 96 per cent graduation rate last year and we expect a rate close to 100 per cent this year. I do not see how the courses of study will improve the graduation rates of students.

**Mrs D.J. GUISE:** Do you not think that the current courses are so narrow that they are locking out some students in terms of their potential in other areas?

**Mrs Thomson:** No. I think that kids are counselled extremely well in high schools; they are counselled into subjects from which they will graduate.

**Dr E. CONSTABLE:** I have interpreted a fairly grim picture of workloads and the impact on teachers. Do you anticipate that a number of teachers will leave the teaching service?

**Mr D'Rozario:** Yes. We have a new teacher this year and she has made it very clear that she will do an additional course in accounting and will be out of the system. She is 25 years old.

**Dr E. CONSTABLE:** There has been some suggestion that older teachers who are nearing retirement age or are at retirement age might opt out early because it is all too hard. Do you see any evidence of that?

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**Mrs Thomson:** I think that is true. We have two teachers, not in our subject area but in two other subject areas, who are not intending to come back once the courses of study start in their subject areas.

**Mr Szota:** More importantly, as head of department, I believe that teachers should like teaching, no matter what the content. Being in front of the classroom is the main thing. Upper school has always tended to be a place in which teachers can pitch at a higher level, which is enjoyable for teachers. The comment I am getting from a lot of teachers in various areas is that they do not want to be given year 11 in 2007.

**Dr E. CONSTABLE:** Why?

**Mr Szota:** They do not want to do the course of study; they can see the workload that will be involved to get to the stage where what they will present will be good enough for them to be happy with the job they are doing. The teachers are saying that they do not think they can do it quickly enough to make it a really good course. The flexibility is good in some ways but, as I said, we worry whether they will be comparable in the end. The kids will still be competing for jobs and places. Will it change anything? Will the types of kids who are currently getting into uni all of a sudden be different kids? Is that what we are aiming to do? Graduation rates are already high. We have not gone through the PD yet in terms of the courses of study and the reasons behind it. I understand your questions but we cannot answer some of them because we have not yet been given input. That is 14 months away and we are getting a bit nervous.

**Mr D'Rozario:** I point directly to the student sample work, which was given to us by the Curriculum Council. We talked about teachers' workloads and why teachers might be turned away. Here is one piece of work that is to be marked at the outcomes level. The first couple of lines read that it is outcome 1, aspect 4, level 5. You can see the comments on either side of the page. A teacher who is marking a student's piece of work must go through that process. It continues on the other side of the page. At the bottom is the sort of record that must be maintained to arrive at a mark for one piece of work. That is the sample that has been given to us. As you can see, currently we have level descriptors. Teachers know what they are doing. Another point is that if a student gets 90 per cent in economics, we have a pretty good idea that he or she has a very good depth of knowledge of the subject, but with the outcomes, we are not sure of the depth of knowledge of a level 5 or 6 student because the level descriptors are broad. If a student gets 90 per cent in chemistry, we pretty much know that his depth of knowledge is good.

**Mr Szota:** If you sat with this work in front of you and had the outcomes statements at your left-hand side, I wonder how easy it would be to read through an essay that a student has written and say that one part covers outcome 1, aspect 5 at level 4, and then read the next sentence and say that it shows that the student has covered aspect 3, level 4 in something different. It is very hard to do, I imagine.

**Mr T.K. WALDRON:** What currently happens in years 8 to 10 in that same situation, and what is the difference?

**Mr Szota:** We were not told that this was the way it had to be done in lower school. We did it the way we thought was best for the kids and interpreted the outcomes statements. At one stage we were told to convert it into kids speak and at other times we were told to keep it exactly as written, because we should not lose the intention of the outcomes statement. While some schools are doing it that way, others are doing it another way. Sue spoke about the MCJ day that we went to. Teachers from one school said that they had thrown out all their programs and now asked the kids at the start of the year what they wanted to learn that year. Others have a rigid, content-driven system in which the content is specified. Many schools are doing different things. This was the first time someone had told us how to mark a piece of work in an outcomes framework. If that is an example at the end of the essay of a mark book, it will take a year and a half to get through 25 essays.

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**The CHAIRMAN:** I have looked at the printed opening statement that you have made available to us and you seem to have covered all six points more than adequately. Do you have any closing statement that you would like to make?

**Mr Szota:** The one thing we did not mention was item 2, which is how difficult it is to actually level students and the impact this has on kids when they are all at the same level. For example, a student in year 9 may say that he has worked really hard and thinks he is better than student X but has achieved the same level. That is really hard to explain to a kid, because a level is such a wide thing. It is supposedly 18 months of a student's life. They do not progress through the levels in quick succession. The other thing is that it is hard to put it into kids speak to make it easier for them to understand. As Sue said, we have a couple of examples of that. There is a sample of a current economics syllabus versus the course of study for economics. The syllabus clearly says that students must define particular concepts. For example, it asks students to distinguish between macroeconomics and microeconomics. To be fair, that is also mentioned in the course of study, but the syllabus outlines four topics and students are told that each is worth a certain fraction of the mark in the end, so they can work out how much time to spend on each section. Given that there will be an external exam for the new courses of study, I will need to know how much time to spend on a particular matter. The provision of flexibility is a two-edged sword. It means that we have flexibility, but how do we make sure that we drive the kids enough so that they are happy and that, when the comparison is made between them, they get where they want to in the end? That is my main concern. In the end, the students who have always achieved will achieve. We are more than happy to help the students who need extra help, but we do not need the outcomes framework to do that. We do that because we are professionals and we like our job.

**Mrs Thomson:** When I first saw the outcomes, I thought that what would happen would be that we would end up with 12 levels. I am still very surprised that we have not moved towards that. I do not think that parents will accept that kids can stay at a level for 18 months or longer. Teachers will receive phone calls from parents every time a report comes out about why students have not moved on and are still at the same level. When it gets to upper school, as you said, the WACE requirement is level 4, yet kids will be told that if they want to sit an exam at the end to become university students, they probably need to be somewhere near level 7 or approaching level 8. We are probably going from level 4, which we have been told is the standard to achieve for year 9, to level 8 by year 12. They have only moved as far as level 4 from kindergarten to year 9.

[11.00 am]

**The CHAIRMAN:** Do you have anything to add, Mr D'Rozario?

**Mr D'Rozario:** I suppose the one thing I would like to point out - and we have already touched upon it - is point 3 of Gabe's statement. We seem to be trying to get rid of a system that uses ranks and numbers and so on under the OBE, yet we are still using the same system that we are trying to get rid of to match or to conclude what the new system will look like, if you know what I mean. We are getting rid of numbers and so on, but in the current report system we are being asked to measure the quota and we have to go back somehow to be able to get back to numbers to arrive at quotas. In point 3 we talk about the TEA and the TER. We still need some formula to get back to numbers.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I thank all of you for making yourselves available today. We have come to the end of the time allocated for your presentation.

**Hearing concluded at 11.02 am**

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