

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND
FINANCIAL OPERATIONS**

2016–17 BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARINGS

**TRANSCRIPT OF EVIDENCE
TAKEN AT PERTH
WEDNESDAY, 15 JUNE 2016**

**SESSION ONE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

Members

**Hon Ken Travers (Chair)
Hon Peter Katsambanis (Deputy Chair)
Hon Alanna Clohesy
Hon Rick Mazza
Hon Helen Morton**

Hearing commenced at 9.30 am

Hon PETER COLLIER
Minister for Education, examined:

Ms SHARYN O'NEILL
Director General, examined:

Ms JENNIFER McGRATH
Deputy Director General, Finance and Administration, examined:

Mr JOHN FISCHER
Executive Director, Infrastructure, examined:

Mr PETER TITMANIS
Executive Director, examined:

Ms CINDY BARNARD
Director, Staff Recruitment and Employment Services, examined:

Mr JAY PECKITT
Chief Finance Officer, examined:

Mr LINDSAY HALE
Executive Director, Statewide Services, examined:

Mr STEPHEN BAXTER
Executive Director, Statewide Planning and Delivery, examined:

The CHAIR: On behalf of the Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations, I would like to welcome you to today's hearing. Can the witnesses confirm that they have read, understood and signed a document headed "Information for Witnesses"?

The Witnesses: Yes.

The CHAIR: Thank you. It is essential that all your testimony before the committee is complete and truthful to the best of your knowledge. This hearing is being recorded by Hansard and a transcript of your evidence will be provided to you. It is also being broadcast live on the Parliament's website. The hearing is being held in public, although there is discretion available to the committee to hear evidence in private. If for some reason you wish to make a confidential statement during today's proceedings, you should request that the evidence be taken in closed session before answering the question. Agencies and departments have an important role and duty in assisting the committee to scrutinise the budget papers and the committee values your assistance with this.

Minister, was there any comment you needed to make before we get underway?

Hon PETER COLLIER: Chair, I am fine. We can get underway with questions.

The CHAIR: We might start with Hon Sue Ellery.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Thanks, chair. If I can start with the matter that has been subject to some debate this morning—if we need a budget reference, I will refer to page 262 about effective school leadership but really it is about the issue that has been subject to some debate this morning. What has been put to me when I visit schools and I have met with a number of principals who themselves have been subject to violent acts—there is one in my local area who some, I think, four years after the incident at another school is still having to undergo surgeries to correct what happened to her when she was assaulted. One of the things that principals have said to me is that when they think that the only solution for them, when they have belligerent and repeat parents or guardians threatening them or actually being violent towards them, when they seek to get a violence restraining order, they are pretty much left on their own. They feel that the department is not supporting them in going through the steps of getting a VRO. I wonder if you have comment on that.

Hon PETER COLLIER: I will comment in a general sense first of all in terms of the growth or the advent of more violent behaviour on the part of not just parents but students towards teachers and principals. It has increased—no doubt about that. As I have said on numerous occasions in the past, we live in an increasingly complex society that brings with it enormous social challenges that our schools are faced with. Substance abuse is rampant in our community and, unfortunately, one of the recipients of that substance abuse in terms of the outcome is that teachers and principals are victims of violent behaviour. That has become more and more prevalent as the years have gone on. Unfortunately, our schools are getting blamed more and more for a lot of the social dislocation that exists and so parents and members of the community vent their anger against teachers and principals. I am just stating the obvious there; we are all conscious of that.

Does our education system do enough to support our staff? I think we are doing an enormous amount. We still have a long, long way to go. I take on board the point you have made with regard to some principals that perhaps do feel alienated. I have a bit of a problem with the mandatory sentencing component that was suggested by WAPPA today. I meet regularly with WAPPA, and I met with them just a couple of months ago and we had this discussion. There are a couple of issues there. First of all, with regard to mandatory sentencing, it does open up the whole notion about whether students would be captured in the gamut of mandatory sentencing and, particularly, in a lot of instances now we have thousands of students who are 18 years of age, which means that they are adult age. That is a problem. The other issue, of course, is setting standards for that violent behaviour. Under the mandatory sentencing provisions, someone that pushed a teacher or pushed a principal would be captured by legislation that is mandatory sentencing. We have a problem there. In terms of mandatory sentencing that does not resolve the issue of whether or not principals and teachers are sufficiently supported.

Mindful of the fact that we do have a large number of students that come from disengaged families, we have over the last two years in particular provided an enormous amount of support for those students with the broadening of the engagement centres, the learning academy at Midland—I want to expand those—increased funding for CARE schools for those particular students. And they, of course, being disengaged in a lot of instances by design, their families are very frequently involved in that violent behaviour against teachers and principals. In addition to that, by supporting schools through the increased chaplaincy program and increased school psychology services that in itself means that we acknowledge the fact that pastoral care and student services and care of our school environment; not just students but teachers, principals and the whole school environment need that support. As I said, as far as the government is concerned and the department is concerned, we are doing an enormous amount to ensure that we do not just treat education now in isolation as being exclusively curriculum based. It is not that; it is student services, it is support management and it is pastoral care in a very generic sense. I will ask the director general to make some comments with regard to specific support for teachers above and beyond what we are already doing.

Ms O'Neill: There are a couple of things that we could mention. I think one of the issues you talked about is when school leaders take out a VRO. My understanding is, but we can have this clarified, that a VRO can only be taken out by an individual, not by an organisation.

Hon SUE ELLERY: That is correct.

Ms O'Neill: That does require an individual to go and seek that sort of intervention. In my time as director general, what is clear to me is that generally our staff are not inclined to provide the necessary evidence or to, indeed, go to police and proffer or seek to have a charge against an individual. We encourage them to do so because, like WAPPA is saying today and like other people have said, we are concerned about the safety of our staff. There is not usually a great appetite for that to be done. Where people seek to do that, we do provide some support. It has to be done by the individual, but our lawyer—our internal lawyer—can provide some personal assistance to those people in terms of detail. But, at the end of the day, it has to be done by the individual. Schools also have under the act now the capacity to put in place a prohibition order for 60 days. That has been in the act for some time.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Director general, if you do not mind, I do want to come to those prohibition orders in a minute. If I can just stay with VROs for a moment, let us say a school leader rings and says, “I’ve been subject to an assault”, what I am trying to figure out is to test what they have said to me that they are not encouraged to seek VROs and they are not supported if they decide that is the best thing for them. What advice are they given? Is there a kind of standard advice that they are given when they report an incident, “Here are your options; we will support your choice in how you proceed”? Can you walk me through those provisions?

[9.40 am]

Ms O'Neill: It always depends on the circumstance. Given that a range of people is involved, I will just make my comments general. My understanding is that when a person comes forward with an allegation of assault, it does not matter what level in the organisation they are, over the years, they have been encouraged to go to police. If people are saying they are not encouraged, I do not know why that would be the case and that is certainly not my suggestion. I have said very publicly, I think, that to have a standard set in the community for the protection and respect of our staff, like WAPPA today is claiming, and like we have always said, that people should do exactly that. Common assault is an assault; it is no different whether it happens in a school or outside a school and so people should take that action and I thoroughly endorse and, in fact, I personally encourage, people to do so. That being the case, if people choose to seek a VRO, then they need to go to the police and do that, and they need to do that in their own right. Once that decision has been taken—there are other options available to them; for example, the prohibition one which you said you might want to come to later—we cannot provide them with direct legal support because it is a personal allegation that is made and it has to be done through them as an individual rather than through the organisation. Moreover, we would provide them with the counselling and support services that sit behind that, but it is something they need to do as an individual. That being said, I am aware of a couple of cases—I would not be able to quote them off the top of my head, though—that our in-house lawyer has provided advice to numerous people who have sought general legal advice, but, once again, individuals need to seek their own individual legal advice.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Would you be able to say in any given year that you would be aware that there are X number of staff who take out or seek VROs? Do you track that kind of information?

Hon PETER COLLIER: Can I just clarify one thing? First of all, I would not mind the director general confirming that no advice would be provided to a principal not to take that action.

Ms O'Neill: I have never heard of anyone providing advice not to take that course of action. I have never once been told that someone was advised not to. Indeed, if someone was advised not to, that would not be my advice and we would provide them with different advice to that. I am certain we

do not collect information about the number of VROs that are taken out, in part, because some people will do that privately and they choose not to make it known to the school. I do not recall, and I am certain that we do not have systemic figures, the number of VROs that are taken out.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Thank you. It does seem to me that if we want to get a completely clear picture on the extent to which support is being offered and the extent to which we are assisting staff after the event, that perhaps we ought look at tracking information like that, so that we can clearly say whether the legal system is or is not responding, because 25 people sought VROs and the court has only granted three, or whatever the issue is. It does seem to me that that needs consideration. You raised prohibition orders and I wanted to get to that as well.

The CHAIR: Sorry, if you are moving on to another area, Hon Peter Katsambanis had a question on the earlier one.

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: I have some questions around this issue on particularly the media reporting today about assaults against principals and deputy principals. As opposed to the VRO side, I want to focus on the assault side. Does the department actually keep figures of these assaults? Do they get reported through to the department? Is there a process?

Hon PETER COLLIER: Yes, we do and we have that information. I am not sure whether we have them available at the moment but we can provide them if we do not have them. They are already public, and the director general will give you specific figures.

Ms O'Neill: Perhaps if I talk about physical violence against school leaders in 2015. I have just had confirmed this is the data that was being talked about in the press in morning. If I could just caution by saying that while no assault is okay, they do range from quite serious things to being pushed in the corridor, so if I can just clarify that point. All physical assaults and contact of any sort reported to me total 1 606, those involving principals total 214 and those involving deputy principals total 311. Remember, there are a lot more school leaders than just deputies and principals.

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: How many of those were reported to the police for investigation?

Ms O'Neill: I do not think we have that information at hand.

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: Is it something that you could keep or do keep? I do not expect you to have it here right now.

Ms O'Neill: The point that was made earlier about the need to perhaps have a deeper look at our data is something that we have been talking about internally as an executive. The suggestion was made around VROs and it is also around this sort of data. Our incident notification system has some information about whether it is reported to police or not. We may be in a position to interrogate that data to see how many are reported. I think we asked them how many are reported but I do not have a direct link to that data here.

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: Obviously, the department cannot report them if it is individuals, as you said earlier. One of the things that strikes me about what we have been hearing today—I have great sympathy for principals and teachers and all staff in schools who might be placed in these positions—is that as a counterbalance to what happened with police officers years ago, I have not heard any reporting of any criminal proceedings where people who have assaulted teachers or principals have been charged and have got off with a slap on the wrist. I have not heard any of that. I would have imagined that if there was an issue in relation to sentencing, it would have resulted at the end of any criminal proceedings. Obviously, you are not in a position to provide me with any figures, and I really have not seen any reporting of these issues either. Perhaps I will ask the question slightly differently. Are there any protocols or procedures that the department recommends to its staff in relation to when and how these incidents should be escalated to the level where they are reported to the police for investigation?

Hon PETER COLLIER: No; it is really up to the individual and individual cases. As the director general said, in some instances if a principal wants to take out a VRO, they may not want to disclose that. That may be something that they would rather keep to themselves. Having said that, the individuals may not notify the school, and that is quite prevalent.

Ms O'Neill: It is difficult because, as I said earlier, we have many staff who choose not to take action. They are in low SES schools and they know that the parents have difficult backgrounds. Also, some of this might happen outside the school. That situation is quite complex. Individuals do not always advise the school, although they might decide to later. In terms of the data about the endgame and whether someone makes an allegation and it is investigated, of course, that can take some time, and because it is for an individual, we would not be advised of that outcome. The data is always going to be limited, but we take the point that given the increasing not only interest, but also our concern about this matter, that is something that we are going to, and have been having, some discussions about, how we can improve not only the support, care, advice and guidance we can give people, but also the way in which we collect the data so that we can analyse the trends and issues that are here for us.

[9.50 am]

Hon PETER COLLIER: Given the magnitude of the shift and change in assaults on not just those at the executive level, but also teachers in a very general sense, inevitably it is something that education systems are going to have to deal with. They are actually going to have to be more attuned to the fact that this is becoming, unfortunately, very much a part of education in the twenty-first century. As I have said, there are so many issues that principals, deputy principals and teachers have to deal with on a day-to-day basis in the classroom, but much more comprehensively now you are dealing with those social issues that come from outside of the classroom. Some schools are having to have guards on gates for example, which would have been unheard of 20, 30 years ago. They are an unfortunate consequence of the fact that society has shifted, society has moved, and the schools are the recipients of those changes. Now, that is not an excuse; it is just a compelling acknowledgement of how we have shifted and the job of work that our schools have to do now is just so different. Now with that in mind, the director general has just pointed out that it is something that we are going to have to become a little bit more forensic with, particularly, as I said, as far as the principals are concerned, because that has come through to me quite clearly—the principals do feel that they need some more support. As I said to the WASSEA conference yesterday, it is something that I am looking at at the moment. As we move forward we can deal with the curriculum; we can deal with all of those areas from that perspective at the state and the national level. The one issue we have got to give a lot more emphasis on at the moment is pastoral care and student support across the board in education. That includes, unfortunately now, physical wellbeing of those that are on campus.

Ms O'Neill: If I could, minister, just add to that. We are in partnership with the police, obviously, around this. It is not something that arrived on the radio today and we are all now worried about it; we have been working in partnership with them for some time. The commissioner today is speaking to primary principals around a range of issues. I certainly acknowledge the work of the police in this regard. Police can also take out a misconduct restraining order for a school site, and we are working with police to develop better information about that so schools are able to do that as well. I guess you can understand on a school site when a parent comes up, is agitated or indeed a group of parents coming to sort out very often family issues from outside the school—mostly these situations are problems being brought into the school—teachers, school staff, need skills to be able to control or intervene at that time, because once they ring police and then police have to come, so there is a time lapse there. So we do restraint training for teachers, but that is mostly to do with students, and we train people in de-escalation, because they are usually the front person when that situation is happening. Our legal person, as I said before, does assist with the violence restraining orders. We do place security in place when we need to. There are prohibition orders, there are the

misconduct restraining orders, there is counselling. The minister has written to the Attorney General seeking advice around that issue of mandatory sentencing. It is not straightforward. We have children involved. Very few teachers want to see young children in that situation. So we do continue to work with the agencies involved and we certainly take on board all of the advice that has been given and we are working to see what else we can do. But at the end of the day, as we have said publicly—the minister has and I have—and what has been discussed in the news today, is that we call on the community to play its part. There is only so much schools can do. We will be doing everything we can. We are hearing some good suggestions. That is what we will continue to work on.

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: I think we all acknowledge, as the minister rightly said, that schools are unfortunately in many ways picking up the pieces of what is a societal problem and they are the front line in picking up those pieces. That is where the fraying and the fragmentation happens, and that is unfortunate. From an employer point of view, I guess from a vicarious liability or workers' compensation point of view, have these incidents that we have been talking about, this added aggression coming from parents and sometimes from students, led to any increase in claims for injuries, and I guess also not just the physical but also the mental issues that are associated with these assaults?

Hon PETER COLLIER: Do you mean leave or compensation claims?

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: For compensation claims or for, I guess, extended periods of leave through the compensation system.

Ms O'Neill: Interestingly, we have done a lot of work in this area over the last few years to reduce not only the premiums—that is the economic end—but the impact on our staff. We put in additional resources in this area to assist with return to work programs. The sooner we can get people back into a graduated work program, the better. We have had some success in that area, so in fact our data looks better rather than worse. It does not really reflect what we are seeing here, but inside of that is the consideration of the impact on mental health and people feeling under stress and pressure. That is something that we are cognisant of looking at our workers' compensation areas and it is an area I think on the increase. When you look at the total numbers, that is an area on the increase, but overall we are not seeing what we are talking about today reflected in our workers' compensation numbers.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will go back to my line of questioning on this matter. It seems to me in the act and the regs that there are two levels of action that an authorised person in a school can take to exclude someone from the site. In the first instance there is the, "I think you're being belligerent. You've got to give me your name and your address and I want you off the site for 24 hours", and there is a \$5 000 fine if the person breaches that. The next level, as I understand it, is the prohibition order, which is for a longer period of time and there is a \$2 000 fine if the person breaches that. Are you able to tell us: Are there any such orders in place currently? How many such orders at both levels would you normally experience in the course of a school year? If we start with those sorts of numbers.

Hon PETER COLLIER: I am not sure if we have it at the moment. No, we do not. We can get it, but we cannot provide it today.

[Supplementary Information No A1.]

Hon SUE ELLERY: Are you able to tell us at all, acknowledging that you are not able to tell us the actual numbers: Is that a regular occurrence? Is it your experience as a long-time person in the system that those orders are issued regularly?

Hon PETER COLLIER: It is not a regular occurrence. It is not captured centrally. I will just see if the director general can add weight to what information she has got, but it is not centrally collected data.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Why would it not be centrally collected?

Ms O'Neill: At any one time across 800 schools there are going to be issues as you have raised and prohibition orders could be in place. It has not been necessary certainly in my experience over this time for schools to report that centrally. It is dealt with at the local level. It is usually sufficient to calm a situation down. Where it is not, we would work with the school. We do not have the data here today. As I said before, it is in the scope of information that we want to collect to do more analysis over the patterns and trends, but to date it has not been considered necessary to collect it at a systemic level, given that it is something that schools have authority over. They apply when they think it is necessary. To date, in most cases, that has served their needs. Where it has not served their needs and there is escalation, then we are involved. In saying that, it is not a case of schools just taking out a prohibition order and no-one is interested; that is not the case at all. It usually involves the regional executive director. Regional staff can provide support in that case. The local psychs, chaplains and others get involved. So while the prohibition order is the province and the delegated decision of a principal to put in place, they do that as necessary and thus far, until more recently, it has not been something that we have collected. But as I will just restate, it is in the scope of work that we have been talking about, getting better trend data over to see how often it is used and whether something else is needed.

Hon SUE ELLERY: It does strike me, my sense of Stephen Breen's comments this morning was that he was speaking as a person and a leader of his membership quite frustrated. What you are saying about the fact that to date it has not been deemed necessary to kind of track that kind of issue when we have seen the numbers of assaults going up, I can see how he can be frustrated about that. If it is the case that we are not using the mechanisms that are in place now to address it, I can see how he and his members can get quite frustrated.

[10.00 am]

Hon PETER COLLIER: The WAPPA concerns that were expressed today go beyond the physical assaults et cetera. They are talking about general wellbeing of principals and deputies—that is, in terms of the increased stress levels as a result of increased responsibilities on the shoulders of principals and deputies. The release of the model put out had a raft of issues that concerned them and that was one of them—the assaults. We have to have some perspective here as well.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, but you and I both know—he wrote to both of us specifically on the issue of the violence.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Yes, and I have spoken to him about it. I know, but we keep on talking about the WAPPA announcement today. The WAPPA announcement today was a lot broader than physical assaults on principals and deputies. It was much broader. As I have said, we need to capture all of that. In terms of the assaults, yes, of course they are an issue. One of the principals that came to my office with WAPPA was a victim of an assault. I have been to hundreds and hundreds of schools and I get this all the time. I went to one in the south metro region just at the end of last year where that principal, the day before, had been assaulted. I do not even know if that principal has returned to work, to be perfectly honest. As minister, that concerns me; it really does. I will just repeat my earlier comments. The fact is that this is becoming a more common occurrence. While at the same time rare in comparison to the fact that we have 800 schools, any one assault is unacceptable. We have to adjust. As a community and as an education system, we have to adjust to recognise the fact that the assaults are becoming more common, even though rare. They are becoming more common and the department will work with WAPPA and work with principals to ensure that we do become much more forensic in terms of our identification of issues and support mechanisms that we can develop. The director general also wants to comment on that.

Ms O'Neill: Just to give you a sense of scale, I have two previous regional executive directors sitting behind me who tell me, in their considerable experience as regional executive directors, they would have had about three or four prohibitions a year that they supported a principal with. So in

terms of scale, I think that gives us a bit of a story. The other thing is in relation to the prohibition orders and the comments—I heard most of them this morning that were made by WAPPA and Steve Breen, the president of WAPPA. Prohibition orders and your suggestion about collecting centrally, prohibition orders usually serve a particular purpose where the parent will respond to a prohibition order. That is why they have served that purpose. WAPPA, in some of their discussion this morning and in their discussion with me, are talking about parents who basically do not give a damn about prohibition orders or any other such orders. They are talking about the serious end. A lot of their data this morning, which I will go back to the point that I made earlier, involves a lot of lower-level—albeit assaults are not acceptable—incidents that none of them would want to see people get jailed for. That is a critically important reason, in part, why prohibition orders have worked well; they serve that purpose. Yes, perhaps we need to look at collecting more about that centrally, but WAPPA's comments are more with the group that go beyond that and so I just make that point. Their solution, to date, and what they have spoken to the minister about and to me about, and to you about probably too, is that mandatory sentencing, which the minister has already been in initial discussions with the Attorney General about—there are some benefits and some other considerations that need to be had around that solution. I think, actually, other solutions need to be considered alongside of that.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I suspect you will not have this either and I am not sure if I put it in the last question that we took notice. In addition to how many orders at the two levels have been issued, are you able to provide me with information about how many of those may have been breached and therefore how many fines were issued et cetera?

Hon PETER COLLIER: Yes, I am sure we can get that. Sorry, chair, what is the time period for that?

The CHAIR: It is 10 working days starting from when we send it out, which will be after next Monday, but the transcripts are going up fairly quickly, so the department can start working on those answers.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Is that just for 2015?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Let us start with that. In the course of collecting that information, if it is not too hard for you to find out that 2015 was an extraordinary year or 2015 was a normal year, that would be helpful as well.

Hon PETER COLLIER: We will get as many as we can.

[*Supplementary Information No A2.*]

The CHAIR: As I say, we will send out the formal letter next week, but the transcripts go up so the agency can start working on that, and then it is 10 days from when we send the formal letter.

Hon PETER COLLIER: That is fine.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I asked a question prior to estimates about the rights and obligations of the department and the consortium that has the contract for the eight public–private partnership schools. My question was around what are the respective rights and obligations in respect to the operator running commercial enterprises on the school sites. The answer that I got back was, in part, that those arrangements will be in accord with the project deed. That is not a public document. My question really is: given that the contracts are signed, there is no commercial advantage or disadvantage in releasing information about those arrangements, it seems to me, because you are not calling for another tranche of PPP schools, unless you are doing that and have not announced it. You are not calling for another tranche of PPP schools, so what commercial disadvantage could there be from revealing or making public information about those arrangements that are going to be about conducting commercial operations on public school sites? I do not understand why that information would not be publicly released.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Mr Fischer.

Mr Fischer: In terms of the commercial arrangements for the eight schools, there are no commercial arrangements currently in place that involve the PPP in any other private things. What the project deed does provide for is, over time, just as there are in existing schools, the opportunity for some commercial opportunities. An example in a current school might be for an after school care-type arrangement. The arrangement in the PPP is that those arrangements will only occur in an agreement between the principal—in other words, the school community—and the project company. There is no extra entitlement that the project company has over an existing school in terms of the arrangements they might make with a private company. They certainly did investigate commercial opportunities through the process, but most of those really were blue sky-type opportunities, and we have made it very clear to the project company—it is reflected in the deed—that they need the school committee on board before they can enter into an agreement. In terms of the release of information about the current PPPs, that information is now being consolidated by Treasury and will be shortly released on their website.

Hon SUE ELLERY: So I have a sense of frustration then at the answer that I was given. What I asked was: what are going to be the parameters if a private operator says that they have this idea to run a particular before and after school care arrangement, whatever, on the school site—lease out the performance area for a ballet company or something. That was my question: what are the arrangements in place? You are saying that the arrangements in place are that there will be an agreement between the principal and the consortium. Why did you not say that when I asked my question? What you said was that the arrangements will be in accordance with the project deed and the project deed is not available. Why did you not give me that answer? If that is the answer and there are no written arrangements in place about the parameters of those agreements, why did you not say that?

Hon PETER COLLIER: It said the project deed would be available on the Department of Treasury website once approved for release. That is the response.

Hon SUE ELLERY: But the answer I just got, with respect, from Mr Fischer is that the arrangement is that there will have to be an agreement between the principal and the consortium. If it is more than that and there are more parameters than that, and that is in the project deed, I do not understand why that has not been released yet. If it is nothing more than that, then I have a sense of frustration that you did not say that when you answered my question.

[10.10 am]

Hon PETER COLLIER: I think it is going to be available.

The CHAIR: Can I just clarify something? Is Mr Fischer saying—is it the principal or the school board that will have absolute veto over any commercial activities at these schools?

Mr Fischer: Without reviewing the deed, and that is probably what I need to do if that is a specific question, what I am trying to outline is that this is a process. A school is used primarily for school purposes. If a project company wants to investigate some other opportunity—and commercial opportunities are as broad as you can imagine, but the current ones we think about are out-of-school care and the use of facilities by a particular company—then that is done in conjunction with the school because it needs to accommodate the purpose of the school, being used for school purposes.

Hon SUE ELLERY: But now the school determines that, end of story, in respect of before and after-school care, which is the most common—and the reason that they will do that is that in addition to providing a service to parents, of course, the money comes back to the school. I am asking these questions to ascertain where the profit goes if before and after-school care is provided on a PPP site. Does it go to the consortium or to the school?

Mr Fischer: On the first question, I come back to the first point about whether a commercial activity will occur. The arrangement is that the school has a set of core hours. If you look at, for

example, something like out-of-school care that overlaps the school's core hours, it has to get the school's agreement in terms of that type of action. It also impinges on the type of facilities required to provide that arrangement. We have an obligation to make sure that the facilities are available for the school's requirements for not only this year, but as the school grows et cetera. The project company cannot enter into an agreement that inhibits the use of those facilities either now or into the future. That is why there are state agreements or the necessity of having the school principal involved in the decision-making. In terms of the question about the profits of things, my understanding, and I would have to go back to the project deed, is that they are shared. There will be some cost that the project company will incur if the facility is used out of hours, for example, cleaning, gardening, security or those types of things, which the project company is responsible for.

Hon SUE ELLERY: We know a little bit now about what is in a project deed. What is the reason that you cannot walk me through what you know are the parameters in the project deed?

Hon PETER COLLIER: Once they have consulted with Treasury, then Treasury —

Hon SUE ELLERY: What I do not understand is why it has not been made public once the contract has been signed. I do not understand what the hold-up is. There is no competition. There is one consortium. They are not out in the market against someone else.

Hon PETER COLLIER: I can assure you we are not trying to be difficult. I guess we can ask Treasury. I imagine that that would be the standing point for us.

Mr Fischer: My understanding is that the intention is to have those documents available as soon as practical and to put them on the website, and that is Treasury's responsibility.

Hon PETER COLLIER: It is a fair question. I do not have a problem with it, but I will give an undertaking to find out for you. If you want us to give that as supplementary information, I will provide a response as soon as I can.

[Supplementary Information No A3.]

The CHAIR: I am still unclear. For after-school hours, will the contract company have the rights to determine what they do without recourse to the school? Some of your language left it open that certainly if it impacts on the school's operations, they cannot do it, but if it does not impact on the school's operation, they can engage in any commercial activities on the site.

Mr Fischer: There are many activities that involve the school out of normal school hours whether it be board meetings, graduations, sports carnivals or training et cetera. The project deed allows for normal activities that occur in school hours; they are carte blanche in terms of the control by the school. The school also has access to additional hours outside of those to allow for those things I just mentioned.

The CHAIR: And beyond that the project company can use the school facilities and make a profit out of it.

Mr Fischer: That is right. It is not as simple as saying you can have every Wednesday night, because that night might be a training night or a board meeting night. It has to be a partnership between the school and the project company about how those facilities can be used if there is an appetite to go into some commercial arrangement.

The CHAIR: Are they able to build any facilities on the school site for commercial use that are separate to the school such as a private childcare centre that they then lease?

Mr Fischer: The theoretical answer is yes, but the practical answer is no. We have basically said that the need our permission anyway, like you said that is what you are seeking, the schools are fully engaged in providing school facilities. There is no room for a childcare centre or something like that if that is the question.

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is kind of curious because there are schools now that have childcare centres built adjacent or on the same kind of footprint now, so that is not beyond the realms of possibility.

Hon PETER COLLIER: That is under the jurisdiction of Department of Education.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, perhaps let us wait to see —

Hon PETER COLLIER: They cannot build without the agreement.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Just to be clear, the issue that I want clarification on is: what are the parameters of the arrangements that can be entered into by a consortium to provide commercial services on a school site and where does the profit go from those services? There is a difference, as I see it, between what happens now and what I think you are suggesting is going to happen under the PPP schools. A school can currently run a before and after contract with a company to provide a before and after-school service, and many schools rely on that \$20 000 or \$40 000 per year, whatever the income is depending on the size of the service, and they enter into that arrangement as a service for their parents so that they can avoid the double drop-off and having to come back in the middle of the working day, but also because it brings some income into the school. If that income is going to be less because it is shared between the consortium or the school or indeed it just goes to the consortium, that is a significant difference from the way that schools can pursue revenue, and that is why I want to know the answer to that question.

Hon PETER COLLIER: They do not actually rely on that money. The schools are fully funded but we will provide that clarity for you.

Hon SUE ELLERY: They use it and they find it very helpful.

The CHAIR: I will take you to a few schools in our electorate, minister, if you think that is the case. That is definitely all under supplementary information A3.

I will move to another member but before I do, who was responsible for the public–private comparator with respect to the PPP for schools? Was it you or Treasury? If I want to get a copy of it, who do I ask—you or Treasury?

Mr Fischer: The information about the public sector comparator will be included in the information that is published on the website.

Hon RICK MAZZA: I refer to page 261 in budget paper No 2. Under “Spending Changes”, I see that the efficiency dividend is over \$41 million in 2019–20 but there is nothing beforehand. Can you give some explanation as to why that is?

Ms McGrath: Yes. An adjustment has been included in the 2016–17 *Budget Statements* for 2019–20—the \$41 million that is stated. In the 2013 budget process, a one per cent efficiency dividend was applied across all government agencies and that has been included in all years. I have not got the detail of how much it was in all of those years from 2012–13 onwards. Those amounts have been included and absorbed within the department’s budget over recent years. For 2016–17 onwards, now that we have a new budget model—basically a student-centred funding model that went back and a zero-based our budget—that has now been absorbed. The new way of determining our budget and our appropriation is based on student numbers and growth, cost of growth for wages, and other cost growth is included.

[10.20 am]

Hon RICK MAZZA: Also, a couple of lines down, you have the revised 1.5 per cent public sector wages policy and there are some savings there of \$195 000 for 2016–17 to \$20 million and then in the forward estimates up to \$94.5 million. Where are those savings going to come from?

Ms McGrath: That adjustment reflects the state government’s revised wages policy for future wage rises of 1.5 per cent. The current wage pay rise of 2.5 per cent in December 2017 is fully funded in here, and then after that it is all based on 1.5 per cent.

Hon RICK MAZZA: On the third line from the bottom, you have the suicide prevention Mental Health Commission funding adjustment. Has that been abolished or can you give some indication as to why there would be savings there?

Mr Peckitt: That adjustment reflects the correction of the way the funding approach for that initiative was funded in our budget. It was originally provided twice and this is just reversing out the original funding, I suppose. So, essentially, the program is not changing; it is just correcting an incorrect treatment of the funding arrangement.

Hon RICK MAZZA: So how much funding is put into that now?

Hon PETER COLLIER: We would have to provide that as supplementary actually.

[Supplementary Information A4.]

Hon RICK MAZZA: I refer to page 267 and works in progress. Can you give us a bit of an update on the Geraldton Senior College—the works in progress there? There is obviously a bit being spent there, but it looks like 2017–18 is when the major refurbishment is going to be spent.

Hon PETER COLLIER: It is. We made that announcement earlier this year and that was because of quite a considerable amount of dissent in Geraldton with regard to the quality of secondary delivery. There had been a fairly significant shift to the non-government sector and community disquiet, particularly with John Willcock College—a really good school; I have been there on a number of occasions—and also the secondary college. As you know, they split the two campuses, so you had a middle school and a senior school on the Geraldton campus. I do not like split campuses personally; I do not think from an educational perspective they serve much benefit at all, and if it can be avoided, it should be. We did a community forum up in Geraldton just at the end of the year before last, 2015, before making the announcement and it was evident that there was quite a degree of support behind one secondary campus—or at least a 7–12 campus. We looked at it and the most logical solution would have been to put it on a town campus, the secondary college, but that would have ended up with 1 500 to 2 000 students on that campus, which was right at the heart of Geraldton; it would have been impossible. The other alternative, of course, was to put the 7–12 campus at the John Willcock site, and that again had problems. We went down the road of changing the boundaries of the two schools and establishing two standalone 7–12 schools, which will be established. That is what that funding reflects. It is a considerable investment into Geraldton and very, very well received by the community. There will be two standalone dedicated 7–12 campuses and the boundaries will be changed to ensure that both campuses represent a broad cross-section of the community.

Just before I finish answering, I was at Sorrento Primary School yesterday and I was told that they were coming today, and they have just arrived, so welcome to the students of Sorrento Primary School.

MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

The CHAIR: So they understand, we are discussing the budget of the education department, so hopefully the minister announced lots of new things for your school yesterday; and if he has not, he is about to!

Hon RICK MAZZA: Between those two schools, around \$14 million is going to be spent in the forward estimates. When do you expect the main works to commence?

Hon PETER COLLIER: It is actually more than \$14 million; it is about \$20 million for John Willcock and \$5 million for the senior college.

Hon RICK MAZZA: Yes, that is in total.

Hon PETER COLLIER: It will be completed in 2019 in both instances. Geraldton has already started; I was there just a couple of weeks ago. Geraldton will be—because the main capital build

will be at John Willcock. I do not know what happened to the architects in the 1970s, but they lost the plot and they desperately need some work there with regard to design technology and all those areas. John Willcock will get the bulk of the funds, and the secondary college will get \$5 million—and that will be completed by early 2017 and John Willcock by 2019.

Hon RICK MAZZA: Under “Miscellaneous Items”, you have got perimeter security fencing program that you have been spending \$1 million a year on. What criteria do you use to assess which schools actually need that security fencing?

Hon PETER COLLIER: I will ask John to comment, but this is one of the things I get around the traps. It is a bit of a shame that we are in the twenty-first century and we feel like we have to put fences around our schools to protect them from vandalism and also from social issues that exist within the community, but it is the simple fact of the matter. I remember when I went back to my old school in Kalgoorlie—this was when we were in opposition actually—I saw it and it actually had barbed wire at that stage unfortunately; that is the one in Kalgoorlie. But we have seen evidence over the last few months where, as in Kalgoorlie, it was desperately needed. In a number of communities where there are some issues, the fences are an essential component of the safety and welfare of the children and staff. In terms of the actual criteria, there are some set criteria in the department, so I will ask Mr Fischer to comment on that.

Mr Fischer: The program is really based on the amount of wilful damage that occurs to the schools, so the schools are generally ranked in terms of the level of wilful damage that has occurred.

Hon RICK MAZZA: Under “New Works” on page 269 of the *Budget Statements*, you have land acquisition, with some \$41.5 million—\$21 million in 2016–17 and \$20.5 million in 2017–18. Whereabouts is that land being acquired?

Hon PETER COLLIER: In those growth areas, of course, and it is part of part of long-term planning for —

The CHAIR: You could not hold them, minister!

Hon PETER COLLIER: Sorry about that!

The CHAIR: Goodbye to Sorrento!

Hon PETER COLLIER: Again, it is in the growth areas. With new developments, of course, you have got to acquire land for future developments. I was down in Busselton just last week, and we have seen the acquisition of some land space down there at Dunsborough Lakes and Vasse west. Mr Fischer can tell us where works are going with that.

Mr Fischer: The item the program provides for is the purchase of land for secondary schools. We get primary schools gifts as part of the development process. The money in the program provides for purchase of land at Lakelands, Baldivis South and North Butler.

[10.30 am]

Hon RICK MAZZA: Have the parcels of land that you want to acquire been identified?

Mr Fischer: Yes; the department is fortunate that the planning process identifies land as part of the planning process. That is identified in either the district or local structure plans, and so it is preserved and identified.

The CHAIR: Do you recoup that from the metropolitan region improvement fund or the —

Mr Fischer: No.

The CHAIR: You cannot get a rebate.

Hon RICK MAZZA: I refer to page 271. The third line item under “Income from State Government” is “Resources received free of charge”, which amounted to nearly \$14.5 million, but I see that has dropped off a little bit. What sort of resources do you receive free of charge?

Mr Peckitt: The reason, firstly, for the drop-off between the prior year to 2016-17 is in relation to a change in the funding model for the Department of Finance's Building Management and Works. Previously they had a model whereby the department transferred appropriation from the Department of Education to the Department of Finance to provide maintenance services. That is now reverting to a fee-for-service approach from 1 July 2016. That will mean the appropriations will be transferred back to this department, and we then pay on a fee-for-service approach. That is the reason for the significant reduction.

Hon RICK MAZZA: So it is no longer free of charge; it is now going to be accounted for; is that what you are saying?

Mr Peckitt: Technically, we transferred appropriation from this agency to the Department of Finance, so they are just handing that back from Finance to Education to allow, essentially, a fee-for-service model to operate. It should generally be fairly much cost neutral. But, yes, in terms of the other items, we do sometimes receive support from the State Solicitor's Office and Landgate and areas like that.

Hon RICK MAZZA: My last question is to do with the controlled grants and subsidies and the grants and subsidies to non-government schools. I see there is quite a reduction in what funding is going to those non-government schools. Is that to say that non-government schools are going to have reduced funding?

Hon PETER COLLIER: Look, we are still working on non-government school funding at the moment. We fund our schools at a higher rate than any other state in the nation. We are sitting at the moment around 26.08 per cent. That is being reduced, and the non-government sector is conscious of that. But the negotiation with regard to funding has to take into account also commonwealth funding at the same time—national partnerships that are yet to be determined. But, ultimately, as I said, they will remain amongst the, if not the, highest resourced schools in the nation.

Hon RICK MAZZA: Looking at that —

Hon PETER COLLIER: I will ask the director general to answer as well.

Ms O'Neill: Just to clarify, this is not the place where non-government schools get their funding through this line; this is where, for example, commonwealth funding comes to the state for something like universal access, a national partnership, and we forward it on to non-government schools. It is like a project base. Over time, those national partnerships are coming to a close. So they get their general funding—their recurrent funding—through another means. This is not that means.

Hon PETER COLLIER: That is done through DES, another agency. But, again, as I said, the national partnerships come through DOE, and those national partnerships are quite fluid. It depends, I guess, on what happens with the federal government in the election on 2 July and a few other issues.

Hon RICK MAZZA: An about \$20 million reduction over the forward estimates is a fair bit.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Yes.

Hon RICK MAZZA: So what you are saying to me is that that may change.

Hon PETER COLLIER: They do not reflect any payments to non-government schools for universal access, and the payments to non-government schools relate to the chaplaincy program. As I said, there is a new national partnership that will take place. We have a ministerial council meeting in, I think, about a month's time, in July; it was meant to be two weeks ago. I can guarantee you that that funding will be number one on the priority list. It is a new national partnership. So, you would imagine when you have the universal access, which is the kindergarten funding—remember when we had that issue with the Feds 18 months ago now, when they decided, up until September or something or other, they were going to finally meet the comment to fund

universal access? We had to fight for that. If not, we would have had to fill that gap for kindergarten—for those additional three hours—and it was appalling. The Feds have this misguided notion that they come in with this you-beaut idea and fund something for a certain amount of time, and then bail. They are all the same. It does not matter. It does reflect the cycle.

Hon SUE ELLERY: You had to put that last bit in or you would have gotten into trouble.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Well, it is true! It does not matter what persuasion or colour the government is, it is the same thing. They come along and they have this national funding model and they want to get involved in education. They want to get involved in education and they fund the state for a couple of years, and then they bail. Ultimately, then, we cop it. It happened with the chaplaincy program; it happened with universal access. It happens all the time. With all due respect, I can understand why the public gets frustrated, because then a program will be shut in a public school in Western Australia. They do not blame the federal government; they blame us because we fundamentally fund 90 per cent of our public schools. But we cop it. That is exactly what you have here. I am confident that whoever wins on 2 July will fund that universal access. It can be very, very difficult to try to remove those three hours of funding, and then you will see it return, and the same with the chaplaincy program. It depends what happens, but I would like to think that they will continue to fund the chaplaincy program.

Hon RICK MAZZA: On page 274, under “User Contributions, Charges and Fees”, there are fees for agricultural colleges, which has gone up somewhat.

Hon PETER COLLIER: It has.

Hon RICK MAZZA: Is that an increase in students or an increase in fees charged?

Hon PETER COLLIER: No. I will ask Mr Baxter to comment on the actual increases.

Mr Baxter: A combination of both. The fee for residents at the ag colleges in 2015 was \$8 068 per student per year. In 2016 that increased by \$210, which I think is about 2.5 per cent, to \$8 278. At the same time we also have seen an increase in popularity in ag colleges. They are pretty much full, and we are getting some terrific results from those five ag colleges.

Hon PETER COLLIER: It is fantastic. Ag colleges have gone ahead in leaps and bounds in recent years. It has been phenomenal.

Hon RICK MAZZA: That is good to hear.

Hon PETER COLLIER: There is a beautiful new ag college at Harvey.

Hon RICK MAZZA: There is. That is all from me; thanks, chair.

Hon MARK LEWIS: I refer you to the first dot point on page 267 regarding Carnarvon Community College. I have been informed by the chair of that college that although there is \$35.5 million provided in that line item, there is a shortfall for the amalgamation. Could you shed some light on that for us, please?

Hon PETER COLLIER: Yes. As I said, Carnarvon, without a doubt, is one of the worst schools that we have in Western Australia. I am not speaking out of tune there; you will not find anyone who lives in the town who would not agree with me on that. I went up and had a look at it. I think everyone sitting at this table would agree that it is desperately in need of not just renovation; it is desperately in need of replacement. We have committed to replace that school. What actually happened is that the original intent was to—this is actually where we are standing at the moment—complete the primary school extension; that is part completed. The \$17.6 million for the primary school is committed. That is up and running, and that will go out to tender very shortly, I would imagine. We have also committed to stage 1 of the secondary, to bring the secondary onto that site as well. That will be stage 1 of two stages. It has the complete support of the Minister for Regional Development through R for R, and myself, to complete that school. There is a trade

training centre there at the moment, which is bizarre. We have a trade training centre on a site that is a primary school, so the secondary kids are on a separate site and they have to come over to the trade training centre, which is extraordinary. Carnarvon will have a state-of-the-art magnificent new primary school extension and high school, and it will be a K–12 campus on the one site. They work very, very well, particularly in the regions. I remember another occasion that I will go into for one minute; I will not go into too much detail. The same thing happened in Merredin. There was some concern in Merredin with the amalgamation of the sites. What actually happened is that it has now evolved into a K–12 site in Merredin, and it has gone gangbusters; it is just phenomenal. The school itself is magnificent, and we actually extended the residential college there, and it was full within 12 months, with another 25 places. Anyway, Carnarvon will have their brand-new school.

[10.40 am]

Hon MARK LEWIS: Okay. You mentioned that the Minister for Regional Development is in full support of continuing funding. I have been advised that that is on the basis of a business case, normally for royalties for regions, which is normal. Has the department started that business case, or completed that business case and presented it?

Hon PETER COLLIER: I will ask Mr Fischer to comment on that.

Mr Fischer: We are just finalising the business case at the moment.

Hon MARK LEWIS: Okay, so should that go through the process this financial year, or the following financial year?

Hon PETER COLLIER: It will not be needed this financial year. The primary school tenders go out this year, and that is the first stage. Stage 2 will be the first component of the secondary college, and then stage 3 will complete the secondary college. That is the \$17 million you are talking about, I assume.

Hon MARK LEWIS: Yes, thanks. As long as our business case is on a roll.

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: I have some questions, firstly around IPS schools, which I think has been a great achievement, but there has been some recent media commentary about perhaps the emergence of a two-tiered system through the IPS. I visit a lot of schools across north metro, and I have not noticed that. In fact, every school I go to has been enthusiastic in praising what it has allowed that particular school to achieve, and every school has been different. Do you have any evidence or statistics to bear out whether there is perhaps a two-tiered system developing in IPS?

Hon PETER COLLIER: Yes, it is a criticism that is often levelled about IPS. It is something I am very mindful of, and I definitely do not want to eventuate. I guess the biggest issue with regard to the two-tiered system that is often used is with regard to staffing. Quite frankly, they are all the same now. The student-centred funding model means that every school has a one-line budget, so they have that autonomy and that flexibility. With regard to staffing, of course IPS schools do have the capacity to determine their own staff selection, and that has been appreciated by schools. The criticism that has been levelled at the IPS system is that the schools that do not have that flexibility with regard to staffing are missing out. What has happened with IPS is that, if you are ever looking at a situation where you can enhance the quality of teachers throughout an education system, it comes through IPS. If you want a particular skill set for a teacher, teachers will rise to the occasion, and that is what is happening. It is up to schools to determine what skill set they want for a particular teacher, so you are finding hundreds and hundreds of applications for one or two positions. The issue with regard to the non-IPS schools is then, what happens to them; do they get the teachers that no-one else wants? Well, no, it is a misguided notion that the registrable teachers, formerly redeployees, are all going to non-IPS schools, which is not correct. In fact, what has actually been occurring is that a lot of IPS schools are employing registrable teachers. In addition to

that, the number of registrable teachers now has declined enormously. It was up around 800 or 1 000, and it is now—I will ask the director general—it is around 200, or just below 200.

Ms O'Neill: Yes.

Hon PETER COLLIER: I do not think it is happening, to be perfectly honest. We have had a significant increase in market share in public education in Western Australia over the past five years. To me, that is a vote of confidence. That transcends all areas. Do you want to add anything else?

Ms O'Neill: If I can just add to that, because I have been asked the question many times around this notion of a two-tiered system, particularly, as the minister said in his comment, in relation to staffing. In some ways I think it is an unfair characterisation because, with 800 schools in a system, there have always been different ways of staffing. The criticism is around whether some people are able to choose their own staff. Prior to IPS, there was a scheme called the merit selection scheme, and we had a couple of hundred schools that were allowed to choose their own staff then. That was years ago, so if you want to talk about tiers, that is one tier. We also have the remote teaching service, where people get paid more than others, so I think this idea that everyone had exactly the same and was treated in the same way, and that that has somehow change under IPS is a bit false.

Just to build on what the minister said, it has been a really important principle of the IPS system that they were seen as a forerunner of innovation and reform across the whole system. As a result of what we have learnt through IPS, we have changed the staffing systems that also sit behind it for everyone. In fact, everyone has benefited from that. I point particularly to redeployment. Some seven years ago, even if people had the opportunity to merit select, they were given redeployees, and 80 per cent of our job vacancies that came up were filled by redeployees. This year, at the start of the year, it was totally inverse. If you are non-IPS, only 20 per cent of the jobs were taken by registrable staff. Non-IPS schools have had a vast increase in their capacity to choose their own staff, alongside everyone else. I think this idea of a two-tiered system is a little baseless. I understand why people ask that question, but in fact the data says that everyone has gotten to choose more than they ever have before, and our redeployees are lower than they have ever been in the past 10 or 15 years. The data does not support that notion today.

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: Excellent, thank you. Anecdotally, as I said, as I travel around my schools, I do not pick up any of that. That is why I was interested in your response to that media chatter. There are a couple of other areas I want to ask about, but since we are on staffing and teachers, minister, in particular, you have been very much a promoter of the teaching profession and males in teaching, particularly at a primary school level, and that is to be commended. Have we made any inroads there; are we seeing any change in patterns; and is there anything more that we can all do to get more male teachers—more male role models—in our schools, particularly at a primary school level?

Hon PETER COLLIER: No, there has not been much of a shift, and it is an enormous element of frustration for me. We are sitting at about 14 per cent, is it not?

Ms O'Neill: Yes, but I will check.

Hon PETER COLLIER: About 14 per cent of teaching staff, and you will go to a primary school very frequently and not have any males in the classroom at all. That is not a sexist comment; it is a comment that in an education system where we are dealing with the development and growth of children, I think it is important to have role models, both male and female. Unfortunately, we are not getting as many males coming into the teaching profession as we have had previously. In years past it was up to 50–50, or even more. In primary schools it is 13.2 per cent and in secondary schools 36.6 per cent. Those are the figures. There are a whole raft of reasons. Probably in Western Australia you saw a decline with salaries—I think salaries had a lot to do with it. You could earn a lot more by driving a Haulpak in the north west than you could being in a primary

school, or being in a high school for that matter, so you did see the number decline. Also there is just a perception in the community, I think, with regard to teaching and males, particularly at the primary levels. We have tried as much as we can. I launched a males in the classroom project a couple of years ago, which has not been as successful as I would have liked in terms of trying to move new graduating primary school teachers into secondary schools in particular to spread the word. I do as much as I can. I have been to hundreds and hundreds of schools trying to promote this. I am not sure whether the director general wants to make any other comments.

[10.50 am]

Ms O'Neill: No. Just to confirm, minister, really what you have said, we have approached individuals to be mentors—to be role models. We have taken some male teachers, taken the opportunity to have them go and speak to year 12 students, to other teachers and to pre-service teachers, but it is a trend—I have spoken to other directors general around Australia—that is reflected particularly around the nation and most specifically in primary.

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: Has there been any consideration to looking at some of the programs that fast-track teachers, your Teach for Australia and programs like that, and rather than offering them to people at the start of their career, perhaps in that period where they are transitioning from one career to the other and particularly targeting —

Hon PETER COLLIER: Teach for Australia—and again the director general will give some specifics, but there are some programs that capture that.

Ms O'Neill: We have had over the last years some programs that capture people who might already have degrees in other areas when we were shorter in the design and technology area—people specifically who have trade backgrounds. There are programs that fast-track the final year training component of their qualification. For example, we are in partnership with Teach for Australia, and those people who are doing a fantastic job in our schools do a fast-track program. They all suffer from the same problem—that is, attraction of males particularly into the primary. It continues to be a challenge for us and it is something that we continue to work on. We cannot force people to do it, unfortunately.

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: I understand that. The other area I wanted to ask you about was on-entry testing at preprimary level, and at this stage I am not asking you to give me the results. I am really trying to see what information you capture for internal use, rather than to provide it publicly.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Is that it?

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: No, I have got some specific questions on that. Does the information that you capture allow you to identify those children who have gone through a structured kindergarten program as opposed to those who do not?

Hon PETER COLLIER: Very, very quickly, and I do not want to take up too much time on this, but the on-entry testing is a key component of that whole early intervention strategy that the government has adopted with compulsory preprimary; increased funding in the primary schools, particularly in the early childhood years with the KindiLink program for 37 Aboriginal kindergartens throughout Western Australia, 21 child and parents centres—that whole tapestry of early intervention and to provide as much support and evidence that schools can have on each child on the on-entry testing, which forms a vital component of providing the seed in the development of that child. I will ask the director general to make some comments.

Ms O'Neill: The program itself provides diagnostic information, so it is a very much a teacher-centred diagnostic tool that we use and allows them to identify the literacy and numeracy skills and understandings in a way to understand their preparedness for more formal learning. The way teachers use it is to feedback into the development of their specific teaching programs for students, to identify students at risk in critical areas of literacy and numeracy, so that we do not wait until

they get into year 1, and review over time and inform the school planning. So, it is a very useful tool that we use. Obviously, with students who are in kindergarten and stay at the school—because some move—schools are able to get on very early and find out those that have particular issues and build intervention programs for them much earlier than perhaps we could have before.

Some of the information that we found from 2015 is interesting. I think people know this generally, but girls commence school with a higher level skill than boys, particularly in literacy. It showed again the issues with students with language other than English and for students that come from Aboriginal backgrounds. I think importantly for the program, the support materials that teachers have also that they can use to plan programs for the students to depending on their specific skill level. So, it is a very useful tool. It is done for the purposes of earlier intervention and it is working really well.

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: I understand the general nature of the tool —

The CHAIR: I want to move on if that is possible.

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: I just want to the finish off on this, which is one of the reasons why I said I do not really want you to give me specific information, but there is a number of programs available before a child gets into preprimary, including school-based kindergarten, community-based kindergarten, and childcare arrangements—no arrangements in some cases. The Aboriginal kindy and pre-kindies are pretty much essential. I was wondering whether there is any way of assessing any trends, whether children who go through one particular stream of pre-education, if you like, before the preprimary year come into preprimary with better literacy and numeracy skills than others. That is where my question is going to.

Hon PETER COLLIER: So do we track the development of that child depending on their preprimary education?

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: Their pre preprimary education, yes.

Ms O'Neill: I think we are a bit away from being able to make those judgements. The program has been in place for some years now, but that sort of historical basis—the question goes a bit to the efficacy of the different experiences a child might have before they go to kindergarten and whether one is better than another—I do not think we have got data that would indicate that at this point. Teachers would give us anecdotal feedback that would say the students that perform better on on-entry, despite the type of it, have had some solid input into their experience before they come to kindergarten. Some of that would not be differentiated whether they were at home with an engaged parent or whether they were at child care or whether they were at a formalised playgroup. I think what teachers would say is the fact that they have done something was more evident than what type of experience it had been. If their experience had involved some really rich early literacy experience, reading with the parent or being read to by the parent, having lots of language experience, the teachers to date would not have the data to be able to say that one was better than another. I do not think we would ever really have that data, but anecdotally they would say the fact that they had it is evident in their results—but so is their socioeconomic status.

The CHAIR: I should say when we finish Helen Morton's questions, I intend to have a break and then come back to Hon Sue Ellery.

Hon HELEN MORTON: I have three areas of interest. One is around the STEM program and the announcement recently about the primary school STEM programs, and also the Cecil Andrews Senior High School is interested in that area. It was a bit concerning when I read today's *The Australian* to find that the Productivity Commission has come out and suggested that investing in STEM programs is—I think they used the word—“wrongheaded” and that a fair whack of kids going through those STEM programs are destined for the dole other than those that direct their efforts into health care, engineering, mining and surveying. I am really concerned about those comments and I am wondering, given *The Australian* and the Productivity Commission's report,

what evidence we have that the STEM program is a good program for the state to be investing in. I have a particular interest in it in that I have one of those people who have worked in another industry going back into teaching—having my eldest son going from chemistry back into teaching specifically with an interest in the STEM program. I am just interested in that whole area for lots of reasons.

[11.00 am]

Hon PETER COLLIER: I think some get really excited by this and think it is the panacea for improving educational outcomes that everything revolves around STEM. I am not one of those. But at the same time, I am very supportive of our emphasis on STEM. I am not being contradictory there. I will temper my comments.

There has been a significant decline in terms of the uptake, particularly in the higher order mathematics and science courses over the last decade and even before that. That has had a reciprocal impact on the uptake of engineering, ICT and those sorts of courses in the higher education sector. That is problematic not just within Western Australia, but globally. We have seen that. That is captured in STEM—science, technology, engineering and mathematics. They talk about that. It is not specific, because people's interpretation of STEM is quite varied. But, from our perspective, it is in terms of ensuring that we prepare our students best for the future in ensuring that we provide the best opportunities in STEM in a very generic sense—science, mathematics. Coding is very important, particularly with regard to the fact that digital technology is part of the national curriculum that will be embedded in 2018. That is the way we have gone as a government and as a department to ensure that we do all that we possibly can. We provide a lot more rigour now in our curriculum at the senior secondary level and we have seen a significant increase in the sciences and maths just this year from that perspective.

I am not familiar with the Productivity Commission report you are referring to today. I have not actually seen that, but I will say that we are not directing everything to a specific dogma with regard to STEM. STEM is generic in terms of the sciences and mathematics in a very general sense.

We had a really exciting announcement just two weeks ago with regard to the primary emphasis on STEM development. I will ask the director general to briefly comment on that in a moment. That was about \$6.7 million to provide mentoring and assistance with regard to coding, because ICT and coding are just a vital part of everyday education pedagogy. We are not focused on or infatuated with STEM just as a standalone issue; it has to be part of an all-encompassing balanced education. But while you have the decline in the sciences and maths that we have had, particularly in Western Australia, we had to do something about it. That is why we made some significant inroads, first of all, with the primary intervention. Cecil Andrews is also the recipient of about \$5 million for that STEM development. I have a few other things that I will be announcing later in the year. The director general can add more.

Ms O'Neill: There is a lot of discussion around STEM at the moment, but why that is the case and why the Productivity Commission is so interested in it is really taking it back to the workforce skills shortage areas. People have often gotten very excited about STEM as though we have not taught it before. We have always taught it, perhaps not so much the engineering component, but people are looking now at the research on the interrelationship of those competencies for the way in which people will work in the future, requiring greater automation and globalisation. I think it is always important for us to remember why that push actually is in place, and it is about the future skills area, but it is pretty exciting. What I can say is that when I am in schools, like the minister is, the level of excitement has reinvigorated the teaching of maths. I think there are things in the paper today that talk about the fear of maths. Part of our problem is—we talked before about male teachers—our skills shortage area for our own supply issue is around getting people to teach maths. We have staff who are not that comfortable teaching maths themselves. All of that works, I suppose, to keep down the numbers of young people who are willing to study that at the higher level. I think it is really

important, as the minister said, to keep reminding ourselves of the balanced curriculum. That is one of the messages I am giving to schools. You cannot actually be great at science, technology, engineering and maths if you cannot read, so it is making sure that we have that sort of maintenance of the total curriculum as well. But a lot of good things are happening in schools around this area.

Hon HELEN MORTON: The next area of interest I have is around direct instruction as a methodology for teaching. I travelled with the minister to Cape York and saw some of the work that was taking place up there. I had the opportunity to visit many, many schools in the north west of Western Australia in my previous role as well around looking at how these schools were involved. What is the department's position on direct instruction as a methodology for teaching in schools where perhaps the school has not achieved terrific results in other forms of teaching, especially in the north west?

Hon PETER COLLIER: Can I first of all say that I am not a fan of direct instruction in isolation. Direct instruction needs to be a component of a number of strategies. I went with the honourable member to Cape York. Interestingly enough, they have now abandoned direct instruction, or they are in the process of abandoning that direct instruction, and I understand why. They are not abandoning it, but they certainly understand that they want to go back to the state curriculum. Direct instruction in isolation, to me, is fundamentally just a regurgitation of facts. Students need that—particularly in the remote areas of the state, it is a learning tool for those students—but it can only take that child to become much more of an analytical thinker if that child is provided with other avenues of learning. That is exactly what we do here in Western Australia and, as a result, our NAPLAN results for Aboriginal students actually exceed those of Cape York. I will ask the director general to comment.

Ms O'Neill: Our position on direct instruction, which would be the same for most pedagogies, and there is a full range of them—remember the background to direct instruction. It was a commercial product that was developed many years ago for children from an educational support background, so it still is highly structured. It is delivered in a very methodical, structured way where a fair degree of rote learning is involved. There has been a reasonable degree of success, probably a lot of success, in educational support settings, not with every child, but with a lot of kids, and the same could be said in most other settings. That leads us to: it works well for some students and does not work well for other students. The same could be said for any methodology: it works well for some and not others. Our position is that we do not mandate or insist on one methodology, because in doing so you cater for some and not others. Our requirement of teachers is to find the best teaching approach that services a particular student, the needs of that child or in fact a group of children.

In the north west, you will find some schools use direct instruction-like approaches or in fact even the commercial product for some students and not for others. We believe that is appropriate because it works well, as I said, for some and not others. The department's view is that that is the teacher's professional judgement to make.

Where results are not perhaps—and plenty of places in the north west are in that position. Where the methodologies that they are using are not working, our requirement and what we do is have people go in and work with the schools to consider others. Direct instruction would be one of a range of possibilities that they would use.

The CHAIR: I am going to close the session now to have a break. We will come back at quarter past 11, but could I get the four committee members to stay for a second so we can make something public.

Proceedings suspended from 11.08 to 11.20 am

The CHAIR: We will get underway again. I give the call to Hon Sue Ellery.

Hon SUE ELLERY: One of the questions that I asked in the set of questions I submitted prior to this session was to provide a list of those secondary schools that were built before the 1980s, and

you did provide that—a list of some 65 schools. I note that there was an election promise to rebuild those secondary schools that had been built before the 1980s. My assessment of that list is that more than half of them have not been rebuilt.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Do you mean rebuilt or renovated?

Hon SUE ELLERY: No. I will find you the quote from the policy. The quote is —

The Liberals are committed to rebuilding our secondary schools in the next term of Government. A key focus ... those secondary schools built before the 1980s

Hon PETER COLLIER: No, it is a redevelopment.

Hon SUE ELLERY: The first sentence of the policy—I will hand it over to you if you want me to—is —

The Liberals are committed to rebuilding —

That is the word —

our secondary schools in the next term of Government. A key focus will be on redeveloping —

So there are two words there—rebuilding and then redeveloping —

those secondary schools built before the 1980s

If I look at the list of the 65-odd schools built before the 1980s, more than half of them have not been redeveloped or rebuilt. We could use either word.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Redeveloped.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Both words, minister, are in the promise—but more than half of them have not been. There is probably another group where some work has been done but you really could not say it is redevelopment. Less than \$2 million has been spent on them since 2013. The policy went on to say —

to make sure they can provide the best possible learning environments.

Some of those schools are in dire need of work and have had none done. In my electorate, for example, Lynwood high has had about half a million dollars' worth of work done. It needs significantly more than that. The frustration in that area is that down the road two of the very best schools in the state have had significant investment in their building infrastructure. Lynwood serves a much harder demographic and those kids deserve the very best learning environment, and that school needs serious work. Balcatta high is another one, John Forrest, and Kiara College is another one; Hampton has had some work done but it needs significant reinvestment, and Southern River is another. I could go through the whole list but I am not going to spend my time doing that. My issue is that there are a majority of those schools built before the 1980s for which that promise has not been kept. I ask for your comments on that.

Hon PETER COLLIER: That is a valid point. I take it on the chin and I am not happy.

Hon SUE ELLERY: That is no fun. You have to fight with me!

Hon PETER COLLIER: No, that is rubbish.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I was being flippant.

The CHAIR: I just saw the press release—"Minister admits broken election commitment".

Hon PETER COLLIER: There are couple of things, and it is true. I have been to all those schools, and they are in desperate need of repair. We have to live within our means. I have to understand that I am also a part of government. We are in tough financial circumstances at the moment. There have been areas where there have been some significant improvements. You are quite correct; schools in places such as Applecross, Willetton and Kalgoorlie have been rebuilt and in other areas there have

been improvements—although nowhere near enough. As I said earlier in these hearings, the architects in the 1970s lost the plot. The buildings built in the 1970s in places like Carine, Thornlie, Lynwood and Eastern Goldfields, and all the places with the flat rooves, tiny little design technology rooms, no performing arts areas, inadequate facilities for staff and canteens are an issue of concern. I know I am telling you here what you already know. Yes, we have not made as much progress as I would have preferred. As education minister, that is one area I think that we could have done better. However, living in a very constrained fiscal environment, I have to understand that I am a part of government. Those areas I would like to see, the fact that we have over 60 subject choices in our senior secondary level at the moment and all students have to do a cert II, I would like to think that we can place emphasis on those areas that are most in need; things like designer technology, hospitality, performing arts and gymnasiums. Gymnasiums in the 70s were like little boxes. All those sorts of things are areas that I as education minister would like to think that we as government, in the next term of government will address.

Hon SUE ELLERY: That will be a missed opportunity, will it not?

Hon PETER COLLIER: Either way, if you do take over—I am a lifelong educator—I would like to think that those schools will be looked after one way or another either by yourself or by me.

Hon SUE ELLERY: If I give you an example: John Forrest is the same age as me. The D and T room—design and technology —

Hon PETER COLLIER: Are you 40?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is 54 years old.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Really?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Some of the graffiti ingrained in those wooden benches has been there for more than 50 years. The fact that we use modern words like “design and technology” in that environment is ironic to say the least. These schools need serious investment. I appreciate what you are saying about the situation your government finds itself in now but that was not the situation your government found itself in when it was elected and it was not the situation your government found itself even in 2013 when you were making decisions about which schools would get a rebuild and which would not.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Again, I take that on the chin, but we are talking about hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars here. We are talking about 52 schools or something or other that fall into that gamut. On the assumption that we are going to rebuild all 52, the average cost of a secondary school now is \$80 million to \$100 million. You are not going to get much change out of \$100 million nowadays. You do not need a PhD to work out that the government has not got the capacity to rebuild 52 schools at that cost. The actual structure of some of the schools are fine, but those specific areas of need in design and technology, performing arts, hospitality, photography—all those sorts of things that we have on offer now—are not available but they do come at an extraordinary cost. Of course I am disappointed, as I said. I cannot defend the indefensible. I am disappointed. I would dearly love all those schools to have all those facilities. I will continue to prosecute arguments to ensure that we do as much as we possibly can for those schools, ideally, in the next term of government.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I turn to a related matter, and that is the issue of maintenance. In answer to a question in estimates in the other place, reference was made to \$33.8 million being allocated for restorative or preventive maintenance. The answer included the words then, “which is the type of work that addresses the items identified in the building condition assessment”. Now, that last building condition assessment report tabled in 2013 identified a backlog of maintenance of about \$135 million. That would put the backlog that is not keeping up with the day-to-day maintenance that you have to do now to just keep ahead. The backlog, as I read those numbers, would now be sitting at around \$101 million. My calculations put the backlog at about \$101 million. How much of

that work that still remains to be addressed on the BCA report from 2013 is at level 1 or 2? That is the most serious, highest priority work.

[11.30 am]

Hon PETER COLLIER: I will ask Mr Fischer to comment specifically on the report. In the 2015–16 year, the department has spent more than \$200 million on maintenance—\$200 661 000. That is significantly more than the previous year at \$167 million, and significantly more than 2011–12, which was \$133 million. We have spent more on maintenance this year than we have ever.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Before you turn to Mr Fischer, can I just ask in respect of those two numbers, because there is maintenance that you have to do as just kind of ongoing normal maintenance, and then you have a backlog, so how have you split that money between addressing the backlog and just getting on with the day-to-day work, and then my other question is about how much of what is left in the BCA report of 2013 is level 1 or 2.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Yes, I understand that. My point being, as I said, that we had a top-up of maintenance at the end of last year and that dealt with some things that schools are calling out for. They may not appear to be much and they may be just the optics, for want of a better term, but they would have been improvements in toilets or improvements in classrooms or carpeting et cetera, but yes, it was \$42 million provided in 2015–16. That was above and beyond, but with regard to the backlog, I will ask Mr Fischer to make some comments.

Mr Fischer: In the 2013 BCA there was about \$15.6 million worth of priority 1 and about \$5.6 million of priority 2. We do not track our work against those, so we do not keep a continuous running BCA, so it is not possible to identify the works that are still outstanding from priorities 1 and 2. As the minister mentioned, \$15.6 million was allocated in the last budget for high priority maintenance work, and a further \$33.8 million was allocated this year. Since 2013–14, if you look at the maintenance expenditure, it separated those works that related purely to the preventive type; in other words, addressing that work, so just looking at the last three years, including the current year, there is approximately \$50 million worth of work that has been undertaken that addresses that preventive maintenance–type backlog.

Hon SUE ELLERY: If I could just explore with you the comment that you made at the outset of your remarks just then about you do not keep a running tab, if I can use that expression, of how you have cleared the work on the last BCA, so where you have level 1 or 2 risk level work to be done, would it not be prudent to keep a track of making sure that that higher level of risk matters, as opposed to matters which I think the minister used the expression “optics”—that is very important, because they do go to how people develop pride in their school, so they are not to be dismissed—but levels 1 and 2 are actually health and safety issues. They are actually the highest level of risk. I find it hard to believe that you do not keep a track of how you have cleared those or not cleared them.

Mr Fischer: Just in explanation on priorities 1 and 2, it is a different matrix—I was just looking for the details and I cannot quickly find them. There are very few priority 1 and 2 items identified in the BCA that are related to health and safety issues. Anything that is related to health and safety gets addressed immediately as part of our normal maintenance response, so the BCA itself does not generate too many of those. What the BCA does—I cannot quickly produce all the categories today—is it has categories such as the aesthetics of the school. In terms of how a school might present, it might be rated high as 1 or 2. There are some things like structural maintenance, so that would probably be a higher priority than aesthetics. I am just indicating that within priorities 1 and 2, there are other categories that would relate to the importance of doing that work. It is not necessarily a matter of looking at the priority 1 and 2 and saying, “Here’s your list of maintenance work for the next one, two or three years.”

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am none the wiser as to why you would not keep a running track of how you have cleared those items that your own report identifies as being high level risk. I do not understand why you would not keep a track of when you have cleared those. Apart from anything else, you must keep a financial track because money is being spent.

Mr Fischer: You have used the words “high level risk”, and I just tried to clarify that it does not always relate to risk. It sees the importance of doing that work and sometimes work seems important because it improves, for example, the aesthetics of a school, and that may not necessarily relate to a risk in terms of the performance of the infrastructure. The BCA itself is a tool to try to identify strategic programs of maintenance. In other words, where are the concerns? It provides a great benchmark if you do the surveys a number of times. If you go back to the previous survey in 2010 there was \$146 million worth of maintenance identified and the 2013 survey identified \$135 million. The BCA, in terms of a broad tool, indicated that the condition of schools had got better over that time. If you track back to the previous survey 2007, again it was high, so it indicates that there have been a number of programs that have addressed the key items that indicate the condition of schools. It is a broad planning tool. We do not use it at the micro level in terms of identifying a particular program of work for schools. Notwithstanding that, when the \$15.6 million program was announced by government last year, the BCA was used to identify those works that should have been identified. Again, when the \$33.8 million program was announced in December this year, the BCA was used to identify the key areas of work that should be undertaken and so the work that has been undertaken, while not necessarily focusing on a particular school and saying, “Here’s your program of works”, the information has been extracted from the BCA to prepare those programs which have been announced in the last 12 months.

Hon SUE ELLERY: If I do not use the word “risk” and I use the expression that you just used in that contribution about the BCA being seen as identifying strategic orders of priority—I use the word “strategic”—is it not prudent when you make a decision to set a list of strategic priorities to track how you are travelling against that list of strategic priorities?

Mr Fischer: The BCA information is very good guide to identifying what programs you should select, and I have indicated that that is how the work has recently been undertaken. The analysis of that information may indicate, for example, that you are better off putting your money in a particular area because that will have other flow-on effects. A very good example of that would be the roof replacement programs. Over \$53 million to date has been spent on roof replacements and there is further money for that program over the next year or so to address that. In the BCA you might have identified examples of water damage or carpets or other things. It is pointless addressing that unless you are addressing the prime source of the cause of that condition failure, so again, the analysis of the BCA helps us understand or generate the right programs that tackle other issues. I understand the question, and you are right: we should be looking at the BCA at the micro level, and we do that, but in terms of selecting work, we use it strategically in selecting programs that have the best effect in terms of improving the condition of the schools.

[11.40 am]

Hon SUE ELLERY: I find that an incredibly frustrating answer, but I am going to move on. I will go back and read your *Hansard*, and I guess the minister can expect a series of questions in the house. It appears that he cannot answer it now, or he will not; I do not know which one it is. I move on to the next area. Page 267, “Works in Progress”, identifies secondary schools that are due to open in 2019. That includes Yanchep and South Baldivis. Can the minister tell me what stage these schools are at; how much funding has been expended to date; and what is the time frame for works still to be completed?

Hon PETER COLLIER: We certainly can. These will be two outstanding state-of-the-art schools. Mr Fischer, can you tell us where we are at with that at this stage?

Mr Fischer: What were those schools?

Hon PETER COLLIER: South Baldivis and Yanchep. Yanchep is the important one.

Mr Fischer: For Yanchep, at the moment we have just awarded a forward works package to do the earthworks on site. We have engaged an architect, who has prepared the documentation for the school. That will go to tender early next year and we will commence construction early in 2017. For South Baldivis, we again have an architect onboard. We are still finalising the purchase of land for that site.

Hon SUE ELLERY: At page 262 there is reference to the student-centred funding model. I do not anticipate that you will have this information on hand, but could you take this on notice if you need to. Can you tell me how much money has been allocated for the 2016 year for each of the components of the model—so that is the per student funding; the enrolment-linked base allocation; the locality allocation; the Aboriginality allocation; the school disadvantage allocation; the English as an additional language allocation; the disability allocation; and the targeted initiatives?

Hon PETER COLLIER: Yes; we can do that. Do you want the allocation for 2016?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes. Can I be a pain, and if you have a document that does not have any other secret words on it, would you be able to table something so that I do not have to write it all down now?

Hon PETER COLLIER: It is just the figures, so that is fine. I will table that.

The CHAIR: Minister, are you happy for that to be made public by the committee? There is no reason for it not to be made public? Okay. We will distribute that to members, and we will formally resolve to make it public in a minute.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Thank you very much. On the same issue, are you holding money in reserve in the event that you decide to make adjustments to the allocations? You made adjustments to the allocations last year. If you are holding money in reserve, how much are you holding in reserve?

Hon PETER COLLIER: There is no reserve component that I am aware of. I will ask the director general to comment on that.

Ms O'Neill: The only money that we have, if you call it “in reserve”, is the budget review committee, where schools can apply to that committee for an adjustment for new students who are arriving, basically.

Hon SUE ELLERY: When we had this discussion in the last estimates committee, or it might have been the annual report hearings, there were two separate adjustments, as I recall. There was the capacity for individual schools to say, “Please rethink how you have allocated, because we have this particular circumstance that you did not take account of.” Then I thought you actually adjusted the allocations more broadly, and you referred to how you did that by saying that you used reserve funds. I am asking if you are anticipating doing that; and do you have any reserve funds put aside for that?

Hon PETER COLLIER: We do not have a reserve fund to make an adjustment to one of the allocations. There is transition planning. Is that what you are referring to?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Tell me what you can, and if I think we are not talking on the same page, I will follow it up with another question.

Ms O'Neill: For 2016, we do not have funding set aside to make adjustments. We were going through a transition and some schools had certain transitional arrangements, and so we needed to fund that. But for 2016, the funding that is set aside is the money for the budget review, which is the individual school’s application.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Thank you. The final question on this issue is: given that you do your enrolment projections across the out years have you done a preliminary set of figures for the financial years 2017–18 and 2018–19 on the same list of the components of the model?

Hon PETER COLLIER: No. They will be doing it for the current year, and that will be done in August, but not for any years beyond that.

Ms O'Neill: We know the proportion of our budget that is generally spent on schools. I think that has been made public several times in an annual report. In terms of our forward estimates, we understand the costs, and they are continually moving, of course, with each budget. For the school year 2017, we are working through that right now so that we put out the price per student, which comes out in August. For 2017, obviously we are going through that process right now, and for the out years we understand that schools get about 90 or 95 per cent of the department's total budget, so we have not done any detail on the out years as yet.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Can I just add that the second group from Sorrento Primary School has just arrived. The first group was here yesterday, and I did say I would say good day. I say good day from everyone in the chamber to Sorrento Primary School.

The CHAIR: Welcome to the estimates and financial operations committee. I hope you enjoy your visit to Parliament.

Hon SUE ELLERY: So my next question is about the allocation of funds to Sorrento Primary School! My next question is about —

The CHAIR: No; go on. I want to hear that one!

Hon PETER KATSAMBANIS: I want it hear it, too! You may get universal support.

Hon SUE ELLERY: My next question is on page 267, "Works in Progress", and the table that has a bunch of miscellaneous allocations. There is no allocation in 2016–17 for small asset capital purchases. Can you tell me what that money would normally be spent on, and is there a particular reason why there is no allocation in 2016–17?

Hon PETER COLLIER: It is because that is covered in new works.

Hon SUE ELLERY: What would small asset capital purchases normally cover?

Hon PETER COLLIER: Mr Fischer.

Mr Fischer: The small asset is an accounting treatment for the capitalisation of assets that schools spend their recurrent funding on. It is really just an accounting treatment. If schools spend their recurrent dollars on the purchase of an asset, this is where it gets recognised in the budget papers.

Hon SUE ELLERY: So you have taken money out of there and put it where?

Mr Fischer: No. There are two lines. If you look at the dollars there, you will see the line item, and then if you look underneath that —

Hon SUE ELLERY: Just bear with me. I am reading off my list of questions, but I am going to go to the actual page in front of me.

The CHAIR: While you are doing that, I might just ask a question. I find it unusual that you have all of the out years under "Works in Progress", but for the coming year 2016–17, it is listed under "New Works". That seems to be an unusual way of treating a project in the budget papers. Maybe that might help answer the member's question, as well as the issues around what it is actually spent on, and as to why in the out years you have got it under "Works in Progress", but it is under "New Works" for this year. Can you explain that to me?

[11.50 am]

Mr Fischer: It is a good question.

The CHAIR: Yes, I know. That is why I am asking it!

Mr Fischer: In terms of the bottom line, it does not really make much difference. It is confused in the way it is presented; I accept that.

The CHAIR: Is there a reason why it is presented that way or is it just that you like confusing us?

Mr Fischer: It is —

Hon SUE ELLERY: The last bit of the chair's question was obviously flippant. Seriously, Parliament is trying to understand the document. It is not helpful just to say that you accept that it is confusing. We need to understand how the allocations have been made and why something appears in one column and not in another column. If somebody is able to explain that to us, that would be helpful.

Mr Fischer: Can I just make the comment, it should be in one line as works in progress. In the 2015–16 budget that is how it was shown. I cannot explain why it would be shown differently for this particular program. In terms of the bottom line, there will be a contra item in terms of the funding source. It will show that is from internal funds. That is where that item would be matched against. It is an accounting item to recognise the capitalisation of assets purchased by schools.

Hon SUE ELLERY: You are not helping me much today, Mr Fischer.

Mr Fischer: I am doing my best—apologies.

Hon SUE ELLERY: That is a bit tragic then, if that is your best!

The CHAIR: Before Hon Sue Ellery moves off that: you say it is funded by internal funds and balances. That is certainly the case for this year, but in the out years for the next two years, the internal funds do not match the amount, and then in the final year, they match the amount. In those two intervening years, where does the top-up money come from?

Mr Fischer: Sorry, apologies. If you look down to “Other”, those figures will match.

Hon SUE ELLERY: If we look where? Sorry, I did not hear that.

Mr Fischer: If you look at part of the total on page 269, “Funded By”, there is an item called “Other”. Those figures will match.

The CHAIR: But they do not for the 2017–18 and 2018–19 years. They do in 2016–17 and 2019–20, but they do not for 2017–18 and 2018–19.

Hon PETER COLLIER: That is true. We are trying to find it right now.

The CHAIR: Am I correct in assuming that when you say “Other”, it is money that is given to the schools as part of their student-centred funding model and they use it on a capital asset and then it gets booked in under this as a capital asset, which would explain why it is other. You would normally expect a direct correlation. There are two years where it does not correlate so there has to be other money coming in. Is that a sign that it is the extra money for Sorrento Primary School that the minister promised today?

Hon PETER COLLIER: I wish! It is a good question. We will have to provide that information.

[*Supplementary Information No A5.*]

Hon SUE ELLERY: Page 265 is where you list your FTE numbers. Are you able to give us a breakdown for each category of employee—fixed-term contracts and permanent staff?

Hon PETER COLLIER: I am sure we can. If we cannot now, we will get it for you. For this year?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, please.

Ms O'Neill: From the information I am looking at here, in 2016 we have got a breakdown of teaching and non-teaching. As I see it, teaching: permanent, 15 881; fixed term, 4 744; casual, 1 207; for a total of 21 833. All other awards—so non-teaching basically includes everyone else in and out of the school—11 692 permanent, 1 922 fixed term and 773 casual, for a total of 14 387. Those two groups come to a total of 36 219.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Thanks for that. You might not be able to do it now, but are you able to break down the non-teaching into various categories?

Ms O'Neill: We do not have that in front of us in terms of whether they are permanent or fixed term. I will just double-check. We do not have the breakdown of the various awards.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Can you take that on notice?

Ms O'Neill: We can.

[*Supplementary Information No A6.*]

Hon SUE ELLERY: On page 267, works in progress, miscellaneous, land acquisition, it would appear to suggest that you are not purchasing any land this year but there is a separate line item “Land for Primary Schools”. In the line item that says you are not purchasing any land this year, can you explain how you have got two separate things listed in two different places? In the bottom list on that table, under “Miscellaneous” there is air conditioning, bore replacement, gas heater, and then land acquisition; there is no allocation in 2016–17. Below that is land for primary schools, \$7 million. If you look at last year, there were allocations in both.

Mr Fischer: As I mentioned before, the land for primary schools is gifted to government by developers as they release new land. That item there recognises the value of the land that is gifted each year. It is an estimated amount of —

Hon SUE ELLERY: Which one—the “Land for Primary Schools” line?

Mr Fischer: The “Land for Primary Schools”.

Hon SUE ELLERY: In the line above that, “Land Acquisition”, where there is —

Mr Fischer: Works in progress, yes; there is \$2 million there. There is an item under —

Hon SUE ELLERY: So \$7 million is land for primary schools, but above that “Land Acquisition” there is nothing. Can you explain? Why are you not purchasing any land this year?

Mr Fischer: If you go to new works on the following page 269, you will see under “Miscellaneous”, “Land Acquisition” \$21 million this year and \$20.49 million in the following year for purchase of land.

Hon PETER COLLIER: The previous one was works in progress.

Hon SUE ELLERY: In works in progress in previous years, you have made an allocation. I do not understand what is different about this year. You made allocations in previous years and you put some allocations into the out years, but not this year. If it was your normal practice that you listed your land acquisitions in new works then you would not have had anything under works in progress previously, if your normal practice was that it was only in new works.

Mr Fischer: It would have been funding accrued in previous years through the budget process for undertaking land acquisition works. That would include \$2 million shown in 2017–18. The funding in new works is new money that has been allocated, as I understand it.

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is still not clear to me. I am not trying to be obtuse, Mr Fischer, but it is still not clear to me. Are you saying that through the budget process no money was allocated for land acquisition? That does not appear to make sense if there is some money for land acquisition in new works. I do not understand. What has happened differently in this budget year that there is no amount listed in that table on page 257?

Mr Fischer: Page 267.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, 267—sorry.

Mr Fischer: On page 267 that would be money that would have been allocated in previous budgets.

[12 noon]

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes.

Hon PETER COLLIER: But the amount allocated this time.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I agree with you. Why is there no allocation in 2016-17 under that line item?

Hon PETER COLLIER: This is from “Works in Progress”.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes. In previous years it was listed in the two places. In previous years, it was listed on the equivalent pages 267 and 269; now it is only on one.

Mr Fischer: I think it is the way the budget papers have been presented.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Indeed, it is.

Mr Fischer: In the 2015-16 budget, which was last year’s budget, \$6 million was allocated in 2016-17 and \$22.49 million allocated in 2017-18. For some reason, again, I cannot explain, that seems to be included in the new works.

Hon PETER COLLIER: The 2016-17 new works. So the \$21 million —

Mr Fischer: Yes; extra money was allocated this year for land acquisition.

The CHAIR: I refer to the land acquisition on page 267. What is the \$2 million for in 2017-18? What are you actually purchasing with that next year out of the money that was allocated last year in the works in progress? Why are you carrying over \$2 million to next year? What is that for?

Mr Fischer: I cannot explain the exact work, but it would normally be for anticipating the finalisation of the purchase of land.

The CHAIR: But at this stage you must know what it is for, surely, even if you do not have it with you right now. Can you take it on notice?

Mr Fischer: I have indicated previously today that the land budgets are allocated for three high school sites—Lakelands, South Baldivis and North Butler. It will be depending on when the purchase of those lots will be acquired. It will be related to one of those.

The CHAIR: But you told us earlier that you are going to start the construction of those early next year. I think you said that you expect to release the contracts in early 2017, which would be in the 2016–17 year. Are you saying you are going to start construction of those three high schools prior to having purchased all the land?

Mr Fischer: No, I do not think I said that earlier on. I said that the construction for Yanchep will commence in 2017, and we already own that piece of land. I said previously that we are in the process of purchasing land for South Baldivis. North Butler was announced as part of the current budget. We will purchase that land or be in the process of purchasing that land this year.

The CHAIR: In this financial year, so 2015-16.

Mr Fischer: It depends on how the lands configure whether we purchase it all this year or in one year or —

The CHAIR: What was your budget estimate of \$9.17 million this year based on and \$2 million in two years’ time in the following financial year? You must have some idea of what you are purchasing and when.

Hon SUE ELLERY: These are very precise numbers so you must have had a plan.

The CHAIR: If you do not have it now, I am happy to take it on notice and give it a number.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Rather than speculate, I think we should take that on notice.

The CHAIR: Can you tell us what you are buying with the \$9.17 million this year and what you expect to the buy with the \$2 million.

[*Supplementary Information No A7.*]

Mr Fischer: The \$9.175 million is the estimated expenditure; it is not the budget. I just want to clarify that.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, but you think you are going to spend it on something.

The CHAIR: On the land purchases, there is the \$2 million this financial year to purchase land at Highgate Primary School in 2016-17; is that correct? Of the new money on page 269, does the line item “Land Acquisition” include the \$2 million?

Mr Fischer: Sorry; I missed part of the conversation.

The CHAIR: I now want to go to land acquisition and the new money on page 269—the \$21 million in 2016-17. Does that include the \$2 million to purchase land for Highgate Primary School?

Mr Fischer: No.

The CHAIR: Where is the money to purchase land for Highgate Primary School?

Mr Fischer: That is in the Department of Lands’ budget.

The CHAIR: Right; even though it is listed as a major spending change in the education department in budget paper No 3.

Hon PETER COLLIER: There is a car park there at Highgate.

The CHAIR: Hopefully, it is a future school.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Yes, it is. It is a current car park.

The CHAIR: I refer to the budget for the education department in budget paper No 3 and to the heading “Investment in School Infrastructure”, under which is the line item “Inner City Primary Schools”. There is \$2 million this year, \$6 million next year and \$2.5 million in 2018-19 under the changes for your budget. The \$2 million is in Lands. Are you also expecting to spend \$6 million next year?

Mr Fischer: Sorry; can you repeat those numbers again?

The CHAIR: Page 165 of budget paper No 3 shows under “Investment in School Infrastructure” the line item “Inner City Primary Schools”. There is \$2 million this year, \$6 million next year and \$2.5 million the year after.

Mr Fischer: That funding is for the developments at three primary schools that are listed—Inglewood, Wembley and West Leederville.

The CHAIR: Why is the \$2 million in Lands, and not in your budget, for purchase? You get the money for high schools. Why do you not get the money for primary schools?

Hon PETER COLLIER: We will have to take that one on notice.

[Supplementary Information No A8.]

The CHAIR: Is there any other money to purchase land for inner-city primary schools?

Hon PETER COLLIER: No.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I turn to the vexed subject that we just started on, I think, which is around schooling needs for the inner-city and western suburbs. I expect that the chair will want to contribute to this conversation as well. We know from this budget that money has been put aside; I think it is \$49 million for Shenton to take about an extra thousand students and I think \$50 million for Churchlands to take about an extra thousand students, and \$1 million has been put aside for planning for a new school. We can have a conversation about what is going to happen at Churchlands and Shenton—I expect the chair will want to have a conversation about that—but with the \$1 million that is put aside for planning, what site options and financing options are you

currently exploring to provide an additional secondary school on top of what you are doing at Shenton and Churchlands?

Hon PETER COLLIER: In essence, as I said in October last year, I have made one comment on this, in terms of one formal comment, and that was with regard to the options that we have and the parlous view. First of all, you could have gone on the Skyline drive-in site, and that encompasses the existing ISWA independent school; the Fred Burton Park, which is right on City Beach, right near the surf club; the one on the corner of The Boulevard and West Coast Highway; and the vacant land on the corner of Rochdale and Wollaston Roads. They are the four areas that we have looked at. We have spent the last 12 months looking at each of those four options. We looked at a number of others, but we narrowed it down to those four. They are all reasonably feasible, but at the same time reasonably problematic. We dealt with the Town of Cambridge on the Fred Burton reserve. There are a number of issues there. It would have been nice to have a secondary school on the ocean there, but it was probably the least feasible, number one because of cost, but also environmental issues and, I would assume, local opposition.

The CHAIR: And ongoing maintenance costs.

[12.10 pm]

Hon PETER COLLIER: Absolutely. It is exactly the same on The Boulevard and West Coast Highway. The one on Rochdale Road was equally problematic and had some problems with access and size. The best option we have and that remains—we will keep on looking as we are at the moment—is the ISWA site. We can look at having a dual school, that is, on the old Skyline drive-in site. That is a problem; it is an A-class reserve and it would have created a lot of environmental issues, but it was still something that we had to consider. In essence, we do need another school. ISWA has a contract; its lease goes until 2027. We need it before 2027. We tried arduously to reach a settlement with ISWA so that we can provide them with some other options but unfortunately we have not been able to reach a resolution with this one.

Hon SUE ELLERY: When was the lease last signed?

Hon PETER COLLIER: I think it was 2004.

Mr Fischer: It was signed in 2007. It was a 10-year lease with two five-year options at the discretion of the lessee.

Hon PETER COLLIER: But it was originally signed in 2004.

Mr Fischer: That was a previous international school. The current lease was signed in 2007.

Hon SUE ELLERY: If you have had to rule a line effectively under those four sites, what are you going to spend the \$1 million on?

Hon PETER COLLIER: As I said, we still need a school. Contrary to popular opinion, and what has been reported, I said at the time that the ISWA lease finishes in 2027. We are still working here, these people around this table—I keep hearing this—this consumes more time than anything, looking for another site. Ultimately that site will be either a school or it will have to be redeveloped in some shape or form. ISWA's lease finishes in 2027.

Hon SUE ELLERY: You have told us what has been looked at and what currently appears to be off the table. Let us accept that you are going to continue to think of ways to engage again with ISWA about using that site. But while that is happening you cannot just put all of your eggs in one basket.

Hon PETER COLLIER: We are not.

Hon SUE ELLERY: So where are the rest of the eggs? What other options are you looking at in terms of site options and financing options?

Hon PETER COLLIER: We are still looking at a number of areas. There is the old Leederville TAFE in West Leederville, which is something we have looked at. We have looked at the old Perth girls' school in Perth. There are a number of different options and some of them are still active. I do not want to speculate any further than that because it creates false hope. As I said, when we start talking about land and the Fred Burton Reserve, for example, of course it gets everybody worked up. Ideally, we want to get to a situation that has the least impact, that is acceptable to everyone and that provides that option of another school. We will need another school before 2027, and I have said that all the way through.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I can appreciate that you want to get the balance right between not scaring the horses in terms of local communities but, equally, you have parents who are having to make decisions about where they live to get the best secondary school and it is causing enormous frustration for them. You would be well aware that they do not wait until their child gets to year 6 and then make a decision. They are making decisions about where they purchase homes and they are looking at boundaries for existing schools and getting anxious about what a school like Churchlands with over 3 000 kids will be like for their kid, or a school at Shenton—fantastic schools both of them—but close to and over 3 000 causes people concern.

Hon PETER COLLIER: It will be.

Hon SUE ELLERY: So you have those parents, who are anxious. Somehow there needs to be a shift from “We can't tell you any sites we are looking at because we don't want people to get anxious about what that might mean for their property,” to giving those parents some assurances that realistic options are being explored, because those parents want answers now.

Hon PETER COLLIER: As I said, I gave them four options in October last year. It is not like we have been secretive about this; I have been perfectly up-front. Every single time —

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, but we have moved on since then. Yes, those four options were on the table. You are continuing to have negotiations around the international school but you have got to look at other things as well. I think you need to be telling people what those other things are.

Hon PETER COLLIER: No, I do not think we do. As I said, with all due respect, we just need to agree to disagree on this. By going out there and, in your terms, scaring the horses creates more uncertainty. We have injected as a result of this budget and last budget \$90 million in the western suburbs in Churchlands and Shenton. That is part of the process, and in my announcement last year that was part of the solution. If we go out there and in a foolhardy fashion say that we are looking at this, this and this, we are going to create even more uncertainty. At the moment we have outstanding schools in the western suburbs, all the way through—from Shenton, Churchlands, Mt Lawley, Carine—that parents are flocking to. It is a great testament to public education in the western suburbs. Having said that, we do need another school. I appreciate your comments and the reasons you make them, and I appreciate the uncertainty, but I am not going to create more uncertainty by giving a misguided notion or some foolhardy response that will make people even more uncertain. I will keep people as informed as I possibly can, and I have done that over the last 18 months. It is a huge issue. You have an area where there is so much infill in the western suburbs there is parlous little opportunity to just go out and build a high school. If there was a spare 10 hectares, I would say, “Yep, we'll do it,” and I would do it tomorrow, but we just do not have it.

The CHAIR: What are we actually building at Churchlands with that \$38.7 million?

Hon PETER COLLIER: It is general classroom blocks—we have the whole raft here, but it will significantly enhance the school.

The CHAIR: But I want to know how many additional classrooms there are. Are they specialist science ones, or design and technology? What exactly are we building?

Hon PETER COLLIER: All of the above.

The CHAIR: And what will that then provide for as a school? Normally when you build a new high school you say that stages one and two will provide for 1 400 students and beyond that you need to go to demountables. Once you have finished that work, how many students will that work provide for at Churchlands? What are you building and what will it provide for in terms of student numbers?

Hon PETER COLLIER: We have got what the build encompasses. Do you have it there, Mr Fischer?

Mr Fischer: At the moment Churchlands has capacity for about 1 600 and the additional build, which includes classrooms but also the specialist facilities as well and other facilities to make the school function, including a gymnasium and student services, will have capacity for 2 300 in permanent build. We have currently supplemented the 1 600 with transportables.

The CHAIR: So the new build will take you to 2 300 students and yet we are already beyond that now, so we will continue to need demountables there. Will things like staffrooms, canteens or cafeterias—whatever you want to call them these days—design and tech have the capacity for the 3 000-plus students who will be there in the very near future?

Hon PETER COLLIER: I want to remove the notion that the demountables are somehow substandard.

The CHAIR: No, I am not suggesting that the demountables are substandard, but I am suggesting that there may be other pressure points in the school that will not be able to cope, minister. You are going to have 2 300 in classrooms. You are then going to have to have another 700 in demountables. I want to know whether the other infrastructure in the school to support those students will be able to cope with 3 000-plus students, because based on your own modelling I expect that we will hit 3 000 students at some point between now and 2020, so within the next year or two.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Yes, the department has met with the principal of Churchlands. He was on air a couple of weeks ago and explained how prepared Churchlands was.

[12.20 pm]

The CHAIR: That is fine. If you are prepared, you should be able to tell me the answer. Will the other student services and the other facilities at school be able to cope with the 3 000 students?

Hon PETER COLLIER: As I am led to believe from my response, yes. As I said, the department has spoken with the principal and as far as I understand, the answer to the question is yes.

Mr Fischer: The scope of works has been developed in conjunction with the principal and his deputies to ensure that the school functions as a proper school.

The CHAIR: Can you take on notice exactly what you are building; and, if possible, even a site map of where you are building it?

[*Supplementary Information No A9.*]

The CHAIR: I want to move on to Shenton College. What will that provide for? What are you building there and what will that provide for in terms of student numbers when completed?

Hon PETER COLLIER: That is going to the western side of the school and, again, general classroom and specialist facilities. We do have that information because —

The CHAIR: Any upgrades to staff rooms, canteens, things like that?

Hon PETER COLLIER: It is a pretty good school, Shenton is an outstanding structure.

The CHAIR: It is a good school, but there is a point where they —

Hon PETER COLLIER: But I mean it is not an old school; the facilities at Shenton are very, very good.

The CHAIR: I am aware of that, but there is a point where you need new drop-off points, there is a whole range of ancillary —

Hon PETER COLLIER: And that is being provided for.

The CHAIR: Like Churchlands, you know, how you get the kids into and out of the school is going to be an issue. It is today.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Yes, but there are two good access points at Shenton. They have just got a brand-new year 7 build, which has gone down extremely well. In terms of the facilities itself, I am not sure, again, we might need to take it on board, but we have got it.

The CHAIR: Which is great when they are currently having 1 900 students, but they are heading towards 2 500. What I am trying to understand is how do you cope with 2 500? How many students will Shenton be built for, when it is completed?

Mr Fischer: Shenton will have a capacity of 2 600, so there is an additional 1 000 capacity being built, that includes gym facilities, new tech learning areas, cafeteria, arts learning, there is admin and student services provided and quite a number of additional parking areas to assist.

The CHAIR: If you can maybe take on notice again for Shenton exactly what it entails, including even things like drink fountains—whether that will be included or that may be part of a standard build—toilets, things like that, if you could give us a detailed list and a site plan. To clarify, that is A9 for Churchlands and A10 for Shenton College.

[Supplementary Information No A10.]

The CHAIR: With Shenton College, does that \$49 million include escalation; and, if so, how much of the \$49.5 million is escalation?

Mr Fischer: That is a delivered price—the cost to deliver that.

The CHAIR: Right, so that is what you expect to be delivered?

Mr Fischer: We will complete that project for \$49.5 million.

The CHAIR: Churchlands will still need demountables but you are not predicting Shenton College will need demountables.

In 2015, you were able to give me projections for the inner-city primary schools to 2025.

Hon PETER COLLIER: For what school?

The CHAIR: Inner-city primary schools and I did not ask about high schools at that stage. That was in October 2015, but then this year you tell me you cannot predict out to 2025. Why were you able to do it last year and not this year? Do you not have any people doing work in the agency predicting in 2025–2030 what you are going to need in terms of new primary and high schools? It is a glaring error if you do not have people doing demographic works about where you are going to need high schools out to 2030, because it is not that far away. Can you answer that for me?

Mr Fischer: There are two types of planning and demographic projections currently underway. The first is that sort of medium-term look, which identifies where pressure on existing schools will occur. From the analysis that we have done, that is where the three inner primary school additions have come from, and there are others that we need to develop over the next 10 years. In addition, we are working with the Department of Planning as part of their Perth and Peel@3.5 million, which looks at the density of suburbs. They are able to provide data at a school catchment area, so we are putting that in. That provides the strategic view of the density of Perth and from that we will be able to assess where we will be able to meet that.

The CHAIR: You currently do not have any work in that area yourselves; you are now starting that work with planning. Is that what you are saying? You do not currently have any figures on what you expect to be student needs to 2025 or 2030 for the inner-city primary schools?

Mr Fischer: We have done what we call an incremental forecasting process. We are looking at the 15 or whatever primary schools in that inner-city area and we have projected what we anticipate their growth will be through to 2025. We have done that.

The CHAIR: The minister said we did not have any projections available, when he answered it in Parliament.

Hon PETER COLLIER: That was in answer to a question which the chair asked—I have not provided that response then?

The CHAIR: No.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Okay.

The CHAIR: Can I get taken on notice, what your projections are for those 15 inner-city schools for 2025 and even beyond that? Because the reality is the kids that start preprimary this year are still going to be there in 2025 or they will only just have left.

Mr Fischer: They will not be in primary school in 2025 unless they are very poor performers.

The CHAIR: They will have only just left, though. If they are starting year 3, they will not be long gone. The minister and I might have just attended their graduation ceremony.

Hon PETER COLLIER: That is right. The chair did actually ask for this. I think the issue was with the secondary projections?

The CHAIR: It is both. I am focused on preprimary at the moment.

Hon PETER COLLIER: We will get them and we will try to work out why I could not provide —

The CHAIR: I want them for primary schools and I want them for high schools—what your projections are—because I find it extraordinary you do not have them.

[*Supplementary Information No A11.*]

Hon SUE ELLERY: On page 266 there is a reference to new primary schools. What are the areas of identified need for the three primary schools planned to open in 2019?

Hon PETER COLLIER: Sorry, this is page 266? Three new primary schools, including Rapids Landing, Wandi and Wellard; is that what you are referring to?

Hon SUE ELLERY: No they are to open in 2018. There is also a few dot points down —

- Planning will commence for three new primary schools ... to open for the start of 2019.

What areas of need have you identified for those?

Mr Fischer: There are quite a number of areas we are looking at. Obviously, the growth areas, Baldivis, Alkimos, Byford, are three areas; there may be others that we would look at. There has been growth in Vasse and Dunsborough, so schools in those areas may come under consideration, but that is the work we do now. The schools for 2019 would generally get announced in December this year.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, so you must have done a fair bit of work on identifying the areas of need.

Mr Fischer: We have. We probably monitor about —

Hon SUE ELLERY: And I am asking for that.

Mr Fischer: Off the top of my head, I cannot announce all the areas, but we probably monitor about 15 or 20 different areas and do some analysis about their capacity of meeting that. The announcement of schools for 2019 is left to the minister and that occurs in about December this year.

[12.30 pm]

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, I get that. Perhaps you can take on notice the areas of need that you are looking at now for an announcement to be made in six months' time, not by you but by the minister, about where the schools will be. I am not asking you where the schools will be; I am asking you what are the areas of need that you are looking at now.

Hon PETER COLLIER: We can give you some pressure points.

[Supplementary Information No A12.]

Hon SUE ELLERY: One of the dot points on page 262 is about school improvement. An answer to a question in estimates in the other place about the allocation for the Bigger Picture advertising campaign was that the campaign will spend \$510 000 between 1 July 2016 to June 2017. Can you give me a breakdown of what that \$510 000 will be spent on?

Hon PETER COLLIER: We need to take that on notice.

Hon SUE ELLERY: The campaign starts in about three weeks.

Hon PETER COLLIER: I would assume we would have it.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, I would assume you would have it too.

Hon PETER COLLIER: What was the time period?

Hon SUE ELLERY: The answer that you gave was that the campaign will run from 1 July 2016 to June 2017 and you are going to spend \$510 000.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Yes, we can give you the broad areas.

Ms O'Neill: The figure—I will just have to double-check—for media and use of what we call talent for the people who appear in media things is just over \$400 000. It is around \$60 000 for production, around \$5 000 for websites and \$30 000 for research. They are the broad areas. I do not have the exact figures with me so that probably does not add up specifically to the number you gave me.

Hon SUE ELLERY: It gets close. You are about \$5 000 short, I think.

The CHAIR: Whilst you work that out, on behalf of Hon Alanna Clohesy, a member for East Metropolitan Region, can I just welcome St Paul's Primary School from Mt Lawley to the estimates hearings today. I hope you enjoy your time in Parliament House. I am sure that the minister will join me in welcoming you all.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Welcome guys.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will make this my last question; I am conscious of the time. Part of that spend is on research. Are you able to give me some explanation of what that research will be about?

Ms O'Neill: In broad terms—I do not have the specifics, but normally in a campaign like this it will be focus groups around whether the messages are getting to their intended audiences, for pre-research in terms of the types of mechanisms that best reach certain audiences. If it is an early childhood campaign, because some of this will focus on early childhood or IPS, it will be focus groups about the best mechanisms for attracting those audiences, and often for post-research and whether we got the depth of saturation in terms of the message.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I appreciate that you do not have that detail in front of you. Can I ask you to take that on notice as well and give me the actual detail of what the \$30 000 for research will be spent on.

[Supplementary Information No A13.]

The CHAIR: Noting the time, I have one final question. We talked about the western suburbs high schools. When do you expect to make a decision about the location or possible locations for a new

inner-city primary school? What is your time frame for getting a decision about when and where we will have a new inner-city primary school?

Mr Fischer: Are you talking about the CBD or are you talking about the broader —

The CHAIR: I think you previously indicated that there are potentially two—a CBD one and also an inner northern suburbs one. I suspect there is also a need for the inner western suburbs as well. I am happy for you to tell me which is which. What is your time frame for coming to a decision about location and timing of new inner-city schools in the broadest possible sense?

Mr Fischer: I think that will be done over the next five years. I do not think there is an urgency to find an inner-city school prior to that.

The CHAIR: In the inner northern and in the inner western suburbs, you are comfortable that you can cope with demand for the next 10 years, so you will not make a decision within the next five years.

Mr Fischer: I think I indicated that the decision would be made within the next five years. Is that what I said?

Hon PETER COLLIER: Yes.

The CHAIR: Which says to me that it will be closer to five years than next year; otherwise you would be saying that it will be made within the next 12 months. Is that right?

Mr Fischer: It will not be made within 12 months but it is in that horizon.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Yes. As you would be aware, we have made some changes at West Leederville and Inglewood, and a whole raft of other improvements—the sizes. Again, I do not want to speculate too much on that, but certainly I doubt that it will be within the next 12 months, but probably before five years.

The CHAIR: Minister, you said it was unacceptable to have a high school of 3 000 in December 2014.

Hon PETER COLLIER: That is right.

The CHAIR: We are now in the middle of 2016 and we are still debating about where we are going to locate them. I would have thought we should be identifying sites and making decisions about those now because even with all the best will and endeavours, it may still take a couple of years to do that. Are we looking at those potential sites now?

Hon PETER COLLIER: Yes.

The CHAIR: If we find one, surely we would make that decision once we find one, would we not?

Hon PETER COLLIER: Yes.

The CHAIR: Thank you. If you are able to give us any more information on inner-city primary schools and western suburbs primary schools, I will take that as supplementary information.

[Supplementary Information No A14.]

The CHAIR: On behalf of the committee, I thank you for your attendance today. The committee will forward any additional questions it has to you in writing after Monday, 20 June 2016, together with the transcript of evidence, which includes the questions you have taken on notice highlighted in the transcript. Responses to these questions will be requested in 10 working days of receipt of the questions. Should you be unable to meet this due date, please advise the committee in writing as soon as possible before the due date. The advice is to include specific reasons as to why the due date cannot be met. If members have any unasked questions, I ask them to submit these to the committee clerk at the close of the hearing. Once again, I thank you for your attendance today.

Hearing concluded at 12.37 pm
