

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
Wednesday, 22 June 2022
ESTIMATES COMMITTEE A

Chair:

Hon. A. Piccolo

Members:

Hon. J.A.W. Gardner

Mr D.K.B. Basham

Mr J. Fulbrook

Ms C.L. Hutchesson

Mr P.N. McBride

Ms J.M. Stinson

The committee met at 09:00

Estimates Vote

DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION, \$3,224,421,000

ADMINISTERED ITEMS FOR THE DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION, \$189,683,000

DEPARTMENT FOR INNOVATION AND SKILLS, \$382,416,000

**ADMINISTERED ITEMS FOR THE DEPARTMENT FOR INNOVATION AND
SKILLS, \$13,365,000**

Minister:

Hon. B.I. Boyer, Minister for Education, Training and Skills.

Departmental Advisers:

Prof. M. Westwell, Chief Executive, Department for Education.

Mr C. Bernardi, Chief Financial Officer, Department for Education.

Mr B. Temperly, Chief Operating Officer, Department for Education.

Dr C. Croser-Barlow, Executive Director, Support and Inclusion, Department for Education.

Mr B. Glasgow, Executive Director, Infrastructure, Department for Education.

Mr T. Anastasiou, Assistant Director, Budget Management, Department for Education.

The CHAIR: Good morning and welcome to today's hearing for Estimates Committee A. I respectfully acknowledge the traditional owners of this land upon which the committee meets today and the custodians of the sacred lands of our state.

The estimates committees are a relatively informal procedure and, as such, there is no need to stand to ask or answer questions. I understand that the minister and the lead speaker for the opposition have agreed on an approximate time for the consideration of the proposed payments, which will facilitate a change of departmental advisers. Can I confirm that is the case?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Yes.

The CHAIR: Changes to committee membership will be notified as they occur. Members should ensure the Chair is provided with a completed request to be discharged form. If the minister undertakes to supply information at a later date, it must be submitted to the Clerk Assistant via the Answers to Questions mailbox no later than Friday 2 September 2022.

I propose to allow both the minister and the lead speaker for the opposition to make opening statements of about 10 minutes, should they wish to do so, but there is no requirement to do so. There will be a flexible approach to giving the call to asking questions. A member who is not a member of the committee can ask questions at my discretion.

All questions are to be directed to the minister, not the minister's advisers. Yesterday, we had a discussion almost like around a coffee table between the minister and the lead speaker, so I remind members that questions are through the Chair and responses are through the Chair. The minister may refer questions to advisers for a response. Questions must be based on lines of expenditure in the budget papers and must be identifiable or referenced. Members unable to complete their questions during the proceedings may submit them as questions on notice for inclusion in the assembly *Notice Paper*.

I remind members that the rules of debate in the house apply in committee. Consistent with the rules of the house, photography by members from the chamber floor is not permitted while the committee is sitting. Ministers and members may not table documents before the committee; however, documents can be supplied to the Chair for distribution. The incorporation of material in *Hansard* is permitted on the same basis as it applies in the house; that is, it is purely statistical and limited to one page in length.

The committee's examinations will be broadcast in the same manner as sittings of the house are broadcast, through the IPTV system within Parliament House, via the webstream link to the internet and the Parliament of South Australia video-on-demand broadcast system, so I would ask people to be civil as much as they can.

I now proceed to open the following lines for examination: the portfolio is the Department for Education and the programs are school education and early childhood development. The minister appearing is the Minister for Education, Training and Skills. I declare the proposed payments open for examination and invite the minister to make a statement if he wishes to and also to introduce his advisers.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I will introduce the advisers and make a very short opening statement. On my immediate left is Professor Martin Westwell, the chief executive of the department. On my right is Ben Temperly, the chief operating officer. Mr Chris Bernardi, on my far left, is the chief financial officer. Behind me are Dr Caroline Croser-Barlow, Executive Director, Support and Inclusion; Mr Bill Glasgow, Executive Director of Infrastructure; and Mr Theo Anastasiou, Assistant Director, Budget. I will make a very short opening statement.

It is a great privilege to be the Minister for Education, Training and Skills. I acknowledge from the outset the tenure of the member for Morialta across the previous four years. I think it is fair to say that many things that occur in the education and early childhood portfolios have bipartisan support. That may not always be the perception of people in the public or the perception of people who listen to question time, regardless of how few do, but I acknowledge his service across the last four years.

I know that the member will agree when I say that I am continually impressed by the work happening in education and by the commitment and passion that everyone working in our education system has for making the lives of young people in South Australia better. One of the anecdotes I have already almost worn out in my short three months as minister is that I learned from my father, who was a teacher, that teaching really is a vocation and that there are not many professions that can be described as a vocation—it is very uncommon.

For many people in our teaching profession, regardless of the sector in which they teach, whether it is in the public or non-government systems, to them it is a calling and many choose to remain in the classroom. Even when there is the opportunity perhaps to move into administration roles and earn more money, they remain where they are because they are committed to the education of kids and that is what they want to do with their lives. I acknowledge that.

I want to acknowledge that more so than ever in the last 2½ years of the pandemic we have asked teachers to go above and beyond. The other anecdote that I have well and truly worn out is that, as someone dropping off their kids at the classroom, as many members of this place also did during the height of the pandemic and then tootling off to work, I felt a genuine sense of guilt that teachers were left to stay on the frontline.

I am not passing judgement on the former government for that, as that is what had to happen to make sure our kids could get a fantastic education even through a global pandemic. However, I acknowledge that teachers were asked to stay in classrooms, educating our kids, when many other people in society had the opportunity to work from home and better protect themselves from the virus. We all owe them an enormous debt of gratitude.

I do not think that the effects of having to operate at a much-heightened state for 2½ years have yet completely washed through the system. I expect that we will see the effects of the fatigue and stress they have been under continue for possibly a number of years. As the minister, it is something I intend to focus on. I wanted to say from the outset that we thank them for their work.

The new Malinauskas Labour government is well and truly committed to education. On both sides of politics, we all acknowledge that there is no better lever for helping create active and engaged citizens in our education system. Investing in education is, of course, investing in our future. In the 2022-23 budget we are examining today, the Department for Education comes to about \$4.1 billion, reflecting the importance of education to our state. This budget sees significant investment across the forward estimates in a number of areas.

We will invest more than \$320 million in capital infrastructure, including the five technical colleges and upgrades and expansions to other sites around the state. We will invest in mental health and learning support in schools, with 100 additional mental health and learning support specialists. We will invest in autism lead teachers in every government primary school, and we will invest in a royal commission into early childhood education and care.

The commission will examine the extent to which South Australian families are supported in the first 1,000 days of a child's life, because we know how important that time is; how universal quality preschool programs for three and four year olds can be delivered in South Australia; and how all families can have access to out-of-school hours care at both preschool and primary school ages.

We will do our best to make sure that the quality and accessibility of that out-of-school hours care are at a consistent level across the state so that all parents can feel confident in using it for their children. We know it is an important option for many families to make sure they are able to work—in some cases re-enter the workforce, seek more hours or change profession. It is often a block to young working families or single parents if they cannot find care outside regular school hours in order to do that.

I also take the opportunity to thank my departmental staff for their hard work and the changes that come with the change of government. It must be incredibly frustrating for the Public Service every four years to have to deal with the amount of work that goes into preparing incoming government briefs for whatever party is fortunate enough to form government. It is a lot of work. Regardless of who the victor is, one of those sets is disposed of. I acknowledge the very hard work that has been carried out by the people who sit around me today and also the many back at 31 Flinders Street and elsewhere who did that work.

I want to make sure I finish by acknowledging the work of the former chief executive as well, Mr Rick Persse, who I think was the longest serving Chief Executive of the Department for Education since 1977, which is a pretty remarkable feat. He did about six years, which goes to show how many changes we have had in chief executives, and I hope we can move away from that. I acknowledge the former minister for keeping Rick on after he was an appointment of the former government. He has moved on to another role, and the Premier was very keen to have him in that role. I am very glad to have Professor Westwell in the role now, but I wanted to acknowledge the incredible work Rick did through a global pandemic.

He also came to the department at a difficult time and has done a lot of work to settle things down and enable the agency to get back to its core business. I note, too, that routinely as the shadow

minister and as the local member of parliament I had very positive feedback from principals in particular about Rick's work and his commitment to getting out and meeting them and talking to them. So I want to say from the outset we thank Rick and of course Tammie Pribanic as well, who has joined Rick in DTF. I thank them both for the incredible work they have done. I will leave my opening statement there.

The CHAIR: The lead speaker of the opposition, the member for Morialta.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Thank you, sir. Very briefly, in opening can I endorse the minister's words about the outstanding staff across the Department for Education and more broadly across the education system in South Australia. During the two years of the pandemic, I think South Australia's children and young people were served extraordinarily well by our education workforce, and I reiterate my thanks to them for that hard work. I know that every opportunity that the new minister has and certainly that I had, we join in being impressed by the staff and impressed by the students and young people in South Australia, for whom we are all about.

I would like to start with the technical colleges, so we will use Budget Paper 5, page 25 as a reference if that is easiest. I know that yesterday the government announced that the location of the first of the five technical colleges is to be Findon High School. I note that the election document states that the first of the colleges will be open at the start of the 2024 school year. I have a few questions on this area. What will be the value of the capital investment in the Findon High School technical college out of \$175 million?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Thank you, member for Morialta. I am pretty sure the capital value of the build at Findon will be \$35 million, because I think we accounted for an even split across the five sites in terms of building the five locations. There is then operating money of course on top of that for each of the five. But, as the chief executive reminds me, there may be a differences in each site depending on what we come up against when we do the build. We will work on that, but I am pretty confident that we erred on the side of caution in terms of budgeting for how much it might cost. But, yes, I think \$35 million is what we estimated for each of the five sites, including Findon.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Is the investment in the Findon High School technical college being treated as a separate project from the existing \$10 million improvements, or is this a separate build on a separate site?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: We might come back to you with a more specific answer, but I know that when we budgeted it in opposition the \$35 million for the tech school was deemed to be a completely separate project from the \$10 million amount that I think was committed back in 2017.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Is it planned that the capital works at the Findon High School technical college will be complete by the start of the 2024 school year, or is it anticipated that programs will be offered while the building is still underway?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: We have not really considered, member for Morialta, whether or not we can offer the programs while the building is underway, but we are committed to having technical college operational by the start the 2024 school year, and we are confident we can meet that time line.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: With respect to the technical college at Findon, what new qualifications or partnerships with business and industry will be offered by this new technical college that were not offered previously either at Findon High School or at nearby high schools?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: At the announcement we made yesterday, we were pleasingly joined by representatives from BAE who were asked questions by the media around what kind of courses they would like to see offered at all our technical colleges. I guess that, given the proximity of the Findon one to the operations of BAE—I think at Osborne and Edinburgh Parks, from memory—they were very keen to have it focusing on advanced manufacturing. I guess it was skills around welding and electrotechnology, which is the pre-apprenticeship for someone to become a sparky.

There were a couple of other things as well that I know that BAE highlighted they would like to see offered at our technical schools in order to help them have the pipeline of work they are going to need for their projects. I am confident that there will be unique offerings at Findon High. Some might be those I just mentioned, some might be things that are already offered elsewhere, but I think

this is really about providing the pathway for students to go from year 10, learn these skills, potentially undertake certificate IIs that lead into an apprenticeship and then into the workforce.

They were the comments that were made by BAE, particularly yesterday, around getting people at a younger age on that path to having those trades, with a view very early on, from that year 10 level, to the job they might find themselves in once they finish at the technical school.

I think that in my mind and in the Premier's when we were talking about potentially making a commitment before the election on technical colleges, we were very conscious of feedback we both had from employers who directly employ apprentices, or RTOs or GTOs who have apprentices on the books. I think more work needs to be done in terms of providing them with apprentices or trainees who are ready to fulfil that role—not so much job ready as apprentice ready—because we know we have a bit of an issue with people dropping out.

I have been alarmed—and I am sure that this is feedback that the member for Morialta has had around the traps as well—by the number of employers who say they feel like they are putting in an increasing amount of their own personal time and effort, even at chief executive level. I had a story like that from Anthony Kittel at REDARC that they are making sure that apprentices actually finish, that they get all the way through.

There are stories ranging from calling them up, to going around to their house in the morning to make sure that they are out of bed and that they are coming along. They have said that they would like to make sure that we are not only preparing people who are job ready—and these technical colleges will do that—but also preparing people who are more ready and committed to not just starting an apprenticeship but actually completing one as well.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: What discussions has the minister had with Catholic Education South Australia in relation to the establishment of the new technical college at Findon, especially because it is fairly close to the new Catholic Education Western Technical College, which accepts enrolments from all three sectors? Will the two technical colleges endeavour to be offering a complementary suite of VET, or will they be competing?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I do not want them to be competing. I have made comments—and I made these again yesterday—about why we chose the five locations that we did. I did have some conversations with, I think it might have been Neil McGoran and Denis Ralph a couple of times, and they, of course, said they would not like to see the technical colleges that the government is going to build compete with theirs. I do not want to see that either.

I think it is about choice and making sure that, regardless of where they live, people have the option of a technical college, which I think is proving to be a very attractive model. I think of St Patrick's Technical College in the north and the number of students from my sort of state area in the north-east who are choosing to go there. It is clear that parents are voting with their feet. Yesterday, the principal of Findon, Kathleen Hoare, actually made comment to the media about the fact that her phone has been ringing hot already from parents asking when enrolments are going to be taken?

I have been careful to say that we tried to place them as best we could in areas that would complement the existing Catholic offerings at St Pat's, Western Technical and Cardijn so that they complement each other both in terms of their location and also, I hope, in terms of their course offerings. I have committed to working with the Catholic sector the whole way on making sure we do that.

It would not be an ideal outcome in terms of expenditure of taxpayers' money, and there is a considerable amount going to these projects, if we simply replicated what is happening elsewhere. I admit and acknowledge that it is also about choice and offering, like we do in the primary and secondary years, government and non-government options. I might allow Professor Westwell to add a couple of additional comments to that.

Prof. WESTWELL: Just to say that the technical colleges are designed to be complementary with Catholic colleges and also with the offerings from government and public schools, but also Western Technical College is a day a week facility, not an enrolment college, so we want to make sure that there is that capacity within the system as well.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: If I can add one very short thing for the member of Morialta too. We are working with the 7 industry skills councils—that work has already begun—and speaking with them about what they want to see offered at the technical colleges as well, to make sure that we are not only trying to complement what existing technical colleges offer but also making sure that our skills councils provide that expert advice on the courses they think are needed to meet existing skill shortages and areas of demand into the future, so that work has commenced already.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: A couple of questions flow from those answers. Given the minister's comments about wanting to work with Catholic Education and his desire that they not be competing, is the minister or the government open to working with Catholic Education, especially given that Western Technical College accepts enrolments from all sectors, towards a joint marketing exercise or, indeed, the collaboration in identifying pathways for students who might be interested in the offerings at either Western Technical College or the Findon technical college?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: That is a very good question and my answer would be, yes, I think we would be open to that. I want to maximise these. I do not want us to build five technical colleges at a cost of \$208.8 million and not get the results that we need. I gave my commitment to both Denis Ralph and Mr McGoran both as the shadow minister and now as minister that that is what I want to achieve.

I have an enormous amount of respect in particular for St Patrick's Technical College. Danny goes to absolutely everything, as the Chair would know, and works in his community to build awareness of the technical college and support the kids to go there. I will be honest and say that St Pat's was my inspiration, and I think the Premier's as well, for really backing this in hard. It is a very good question from the member and, yes, we are open to that is my answer.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Partly flowing from the chief executive's answer, what will be the governance model for these new entities? Are all five going to have a similar governance model or are you going to have bespoke models at each of them? Are they going to be, for example, integrated within Findon High School or is it a separate institution to be co-located with Findon High School?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I will make some remarks and then Professor Westwell will too. We are looking at those models right now because there are different models of how we do that. I think we are open to different ideas in terms of how we do it, in terms of whether they are standalone institutions that the students enrol in, or whether they are at a host school, so to speak, and then attend the technical college. We are going to work through with all the stakeholders on how we best do that, but I am happy for Professor Westwell to add to that.

Prof. WESTWELL: We are going to work with the communities and industry to make sure that each site is going to work best for those students and, of course, those pathways to industry in those areas, so there will be bespoke models for each one. As far as Findon goes, and from a Findon point of view, it will be integrated within the school.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: In relation to that, will Findon High School continue to offer the broad range of curriculum offerings from years 7 to 12? The St Patrick's model that the minister has spoken of is a years 10 to 12 senior secondary school, with their technical offering. Is Findon still going to have the years 7 to 9, as in it is still going to be offering a general curriculum in addition to the technical offerings, or will it be focusing exclusively on skilled and technical pathways?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: It will continue to offer those as well.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: How many students are anticipated to enrol in this college, which presumably then becomes a substream within the senior secondary years at Findon High School? If a student is enrolling in this technical offering, having been at a different high school, will they continue to be a student of their original high school and also engaged in subjects at the technical college, or will they become a student of Findon High School?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I am told that we are doing modelling on both scenarios, so it could be 200 FTE. I had a discussion yesterday where it could be more than that. I think we are doing modelling on the other scenario that you pointed out as well. We will have more information on that soon, I hope, but we are modelling for both those scenarios that you asked about.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Given that we are looking to have this Findon site open in 2024 and, as you identified, the principal at Findon High is already taking some phone calls, would the minister care to put a date on when we will know that governance model, and in relation to what the experience is for students at the school?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I am not going to put a date on it, member for Morialta, but we will make it public as soon as we possibly can because it was very much reinforced with me by Ms Hoare yesterday that they are fielding a lot of calls, and I anticipate the same will happen at the other sites. In fact, the member for Mount Gambier said the same thing to me when I was down there for country cabinet, that he is already getting queries about when students might be able to enrol.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: The education department website says that the technical colleges will 'accept enrolments from public and private schools'. If they are from non-government schools—and I appreciate the minister's immediate last answer that suggests that potentially accepting enrolments from those schools means that they accept the enrolment and then they cease to be a student at the other school—and if the model were to be the other version that the government is considering, where it is in enrolment at the technical college for certain subjects but still the original school maintains the enrolment as well, is it anticipated the non-government school will be charged for whatever course is being undertaken, or will it be a free offering to all students?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: They are all issues that we are working through at the moment. I might pass over to Professor Westwell. He has some thoughts on how it might work in terms of if the student is enrolled, for instance, at a non-government school but seeks access to the technical college, which is very much what I would like to see without, I might add, cannibalising the existing Catholic offering.

Prof. WESTWELL: There is that opportunity for students to move from one school to the school that is hosting the technical college, and for the enrolment to shift, but we are exploring similar arrangements that we have at the moment for accessing VET work for somebody from one sector who is working with another sector. We work on those financial arrangements together. We want to make sure that the capacity is there in the system.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Will the new technical college at Findon be registered with ASQA as an RTO?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I will take that on notice.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: In that case, can I also ask whether the minister or the government has any further information about whether any of the other four would also be planned to be registered as RTOs as well?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I will take that on notice too.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: In relation to the operating costs identified on the same line, I think the election promise was \$30 million, and on page 25 it is slightly more than that—about \$33 million or \$34 million. Will that \$34 million in operating costs for the colleges be split evenly once they are all operational, and will it all go to the colleges or is it intended that a section be retained by head office?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Yes, the amount is 33.8 in operating costs, being provided across three years. We did that when we committed in our pre-election budget costings on the assumption that it would be roughly equal. As we said in terms of our answer to your similar question about capital costs for each of the five, we will work closely on each specific site in terms of what we think it needs to look like to best meet the needs of that community. Given that we have two regional sites as well, which will potentially have more specific or different needs, in terms of the courses that it needs to offer, we will see whether or not the 33.8 is split evenly or whether or not it will be different for each of the five.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: The other part of the question was whether head office will be taking a share for whatever program management is required or whether all of this funding is going to the schools.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I am told there is potentially a very small amount, but our intention is to get the absolute vast majority of that directly into those schools. I guess my answer to you in short is: hopefully not, but we shall see.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Noting that the operating expense is set to grow to \$21 million in the 2025-26 year, will that be the ongoing annual operating budget for this program across the five technical colleges, or is it scheduled to grow larger than that in the 2026-27 year?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I might pass over to Professor Westwell, but I guess again it is somewhat in line with how we have answered those previous questions: we will see as time progresses, in terms of what the budget needs to be. I am not going to foreshadow or guess how it might change outside the forward estimates, but Professor Westwell or Mr Bernardi might like to answer.

Prof. WESTWELL: There certainly will be recurrent expenditure, but we will have a look at that depending on how the technical colleges bed in, making sure that they can add the most value to the community and to industry. We will look at that, but there will be recurrent expenditure, absolutely.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: In relation to this operating expenditure, is that eligible to be applied as part of South Australia's state government contribution to meet our obligations under the national school funding agreement and is therefore already part of the global education budget, or is this new money?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I will allow Professor Westwell to make a few remarks on that.

Prof. WESTWELL: We are seeing this as being part of school education funding, so it will be part of the school education system.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Does that have any implications if the school's offering is, as I think Labor policy and the department's website suggest, going to be an offering available for non-government school students?

Prof. WESTWELL: We would have to work out, when we are working out the funding arrangements, the compliance around what is available for funding with public education and what might need to be different for funding non-government schools.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I look forward to that. In relation to investing payments, I know the schedule is 15, then 50, then 70 and then \$40 million over the four years, totalling the promised 175. Was any of this funding applied from the Department for Education's as yet unallocated investing budget in later years of the forward estimates, or is this new money to the department?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I am told it is new money to the department.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Well done.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: It did not come easy, can I just say that. That might surprise you, I am sure.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Are there any other programs within government from which this government has been redeployed, or is this all new money to the state budget in total?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: From the technical colleges specifically, member for Morialta?

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Sure.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: In terms of technical colleges, the investing is new money, and the operating we are prioritising from existing department budget resources.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Is that prioritisation coming at the expense of any existing programs, or is that solely out of the future growth available under the national school funding agreement?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I will make some remarks and then I might pass over to the chief executive or Mr Bernardi to add some more. We are obviously prioritising the election commitments that we made, and I think the Premier has been pretty clear that that is what he wants to do. In some

cases, I am told by the department—and, as I said, I will get the professor or Mr Bernardi to add to this—that there may be some programs, and I stress 'may', which are deferred to a later budget year in order to be able to prioritise that money towards the delivery of election commitments, but we are working through that.

My answer is: we are working through it now. In some cases, there may be deferral of budget lines to later budget years to give us the capacity to do that and prioritise the election commitments. I will allow the chief executive to add a bit more to that.

Prof. WESTWELL: As you know, as a result of signing the Gonski agreement in 2018, the Department for Education was provided with additional budget capacity, including provision for indexation. This budget capacity is reflected in the department's budget and the forward estimates, which means that we manage our financial affairs according to the education functions of the department.

From this budget allocation, the department is required to meet the cost pressures, such as meeting the additional costs associated with things like the commonwealth Superannuation Guarantee scheme, as well as to fund new initiatives relating to education, such as the recent investment to improve internet access and speed in our schools.

The approach taken is the same approach that has been adopted previously, and that is that the department uses Gonski funding to meet education initiatives that have been announced in the 2022-23 state budget. Really, it does all come down to priorities, and what we are doing is working through the budget priorities to make sure that we are managing those from within our budget allocations.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Can I ask when the department or the minister expects to sign off on those decisions if you are still working through it?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: We will take that on notice.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Will students, trainees and apprentices who are over 18 years old and seeking to re-engage with education be allowed to attend these technical colleges?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: It probably was not our initial intention, but we will work with individual communities. I note that, particularly at some of the regional ones, there might possibly be greater demand for people who are, I guess, trying to re-enter education at the age of 18 or over to do that in Mount Gambier or Port Augusta. If we think that demand is there and we can find a way to do it, we will consider it.

It was not the initial intention; it was about schooling in years 10 to 12. We are open to things that work for those communities and making sure that wherever we can we tailor it to meet their needs, instead of just having a cookie-cutter approach and providing the same thing everywhere.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: When will all five of the colleges be operating? My understanding is that the Labor policy document describes them as all operating before the 2026 election, but I heard the Premier on radio yesterday saying it would be sometime in 2026. Will they all be completed and opened before the 2026 school year?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I did not catch the Premier's radio interview. I must call him and chastise him for his answer; I am sure that will go down well. It will be by the start of the 2026 school year.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I will let him know.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Thank you—I will leave the country!

The Hon. D.R. CREGAN: I take the committee to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 181, either major feasibility studies or purchase of land and property. Can the minister provide an update on any planned capital works to see through an additional primary school in the Mount Barker growth area?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Thank you, member for Kavel. I appreciate your question and your interest in this topic. It will not come as a surprise to you or to anyone else in this place that we are

probably collectively the last few state governments, going a long way back, that have not prioritised the growth in the Mount Barker area as we should have in a range of important areas of public policy. That includes education as well.

Mount Barker and nearby townships have experienced significant population growth, I think due largely to the rezoning of land for residential development back in 2010. That was identified in the 30-Year Plan for Greater Adelaide. Over the five years to 2020, the Mount Barker District Council had the highest average annual population growth rate, or 2.75 per cent, of any LGA within South Australia. I think that would probably come as a surprise to people who do not live in the area. I think it would be a surprise to people in my neck of the woods that it has crept up on us like that, and our rate of investment has not kept pace with that 2.75 per cent growth.

The significant population growth occurring in Mount Barker and the nearby townships, and the increasing market share, has resulted in enrolment and capacity pressure at existing government schools. To address this capacity pressure in the short and medium term, the Department for Education is continuing to progress a number of capacity management strategies with schools in the area in the form of additional and refurbished capacity.

The 2022 term 1 school data collection was undertaken by schools in February 2022, and the current verified enrolments for the schools listed, including schools the member asked about, are as follows: Mount Barker South Primary School, 338 enrolments; Littlehampton Primary School, 363 enrolments; Nairne Primary School, 398 enrolments; Hahndorf Primary School, 220 enrolments; Mount Barker High School, 1,003 enrolments; and Oakbank Area School, 346 enrolments.

If we compare that with enrolment predictions for those schools for the years 2023, 2024, 2025 and 2026, as forecast by the department, it is pretty interesting and really goes to the member's point about the pressures that are being felt:

- Mount Barker South Primary School, in 2023, 403, which is up from 338, but by 2026 504;
- Littlehampton Primary School is now 363, next year smaller growth to 365 and only up to 368 by 2026;
- Nairne Primary School is now 398, and that is planned to stay largely static to 2026;
- Hahndorf Primary School is likely to stay fairly static from where it is at around the 220 mark now;
- Mount Barker High School is currently 1,003; in 2023, 1,185; and then in 2026, 1,412, which I guess is where the rubber really meets the road; and
- Oakbank Area School, pretty significant growth. We have now 346; 389 forecast for next year; and up to 421 in 2026.

These are significant figures. In answer to the member's specific question around what the government is going to do in terms of planned capital works, at Mount Barker South Primary School, to support that really considerable increase in capacity, a number of projects have been undertaken. The former community centre located on the school site was refurbished, providing additional general learning areas, which have been in use from term 4 2020. A modular building providing additional general learning areas was provided and operational from the beginning of the school year.

At Littlehampton, in August 2020, due to capacity demand, additional accommodation in the form of a new two-classroom modular building was provided to the approximate value of \$653,655. These were obviously projects of the former minister. Although Littlehampton Primary School had sufficient toilet access across the school, the principal requested, and with governing council support and approval, an additional almost \$51,000 for student toilets to be built at the western end. I do not think capital works are planned at Nairne or Hahndorf.

Mount Barker High received \$6.3 million for major upgrades, which included new contemporary learning areas, removal of transportable buildings to remove asbestos, a new performing arts studio and learning areas, refurbishment for administration and significant refurbishment of outdated learning areas. It also received additional accommodation to the value of

about \$1.8 million to support the school in managing the increase in student growth which, as I said before, is really significant. A new modular building was also provided to the school as part of the year 7 to high school special options program, to the value of \$1.5 million, increasing the number of special classes available.

Oakbank Area School has had some works underway to provide disability access. The project is delivered in two stages. Stage 1 will provide for the immediate needs of a compliant disability toilet, an accessible general learning area space and an external access ramp to building 1. To date, that expenditure is \$727,000 and expected to be delivered by the end of August, so not far away. Stage 2 is in planning.

That will involve improving access to serviced learning areas and lift access to the second storey of the main admin building. The estimated cost is \$750,000. Aged surplus buildings are in the process of being removed from the site, including the removal of contaminated soil, as per EPA guidelines. We know that never comes cheap. Total expenditure to date is \$335,000. That is expected to be complete by the end of this month.

Mount Barker Primary School received \$11 million for major upgrades, including a new two-storey building comprising general learning areas and serviced learning areas for STEM; a new disability unit; new administration facilities; general building amenities, including toilet facilities and lift access on all floors; a new landscaped courtyard for open play and circulation; and demolition of aging infrastructure. The final works are scheduled for completion in late August. I guess that paints a picture of what the pressures are, and they are obviously really significant. Work has been done, a lot of which I note was done by the former government.

What I can say to the member specifically about what we are planning on doing, though, is we are looking very closely at that modelling around what needs to be provided for the long term for your community, member for Kavel.

I guess I would finish my answer by saying that I am very much aware in excruciating detail of the pressures, and I note your advocacy. I hope that there is something that the Malinauskas Labor government can do in this term to create a long-term solution instead of what successive governments, both Labor and Liberal, have done, which is to try to respond in an ad hoc kind of fashion to continually hitting that cap. I hope to have some news for you. I appreciate the question.

The Hon. D.R. CREGAN: Thank you, minister, for that very comprehensive and detailed answer. It is sincerely appreciated. Chair, I have some additional questions in relation to TAFE, but they may better be ventilated in the forthcoming session.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I have a supplementary question to the minister's answer. The minister identified that there was a watching brief on the Mount Barker area for potential future need for infrastructure investments. Are there any other geographical areas where the department is keeping a close eye on the potential future need for infrastructure investment and, if so, what are they?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: My short answer is, member for Morialta, the outer north. I am told by the department that the outer north has again been identified as a real pressure area, and I know this has been the case for so many years. I know the department keeps watch across all areas of the state in terms of what projected enrolment figures are. I think the outer north is an area of concern.

Speaking now as a local member—and I have no plans in this area—I note that a lot of local schools in the north-east are rapidly approaching their capacity. Some schools in the area are not taking out-of-zone enrolments for the first time ever. That is another example and the examples are myriad, but the outer north is my short answer to you.

Ms HUTCHESSON: On Budget Paper 5, page 25, Budget Measures Statement, autism support in schools, can the minister advise the committee how the autism lead teachers will support improved outcomes in primary schools?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I thank the member for Waite for her excellent question. I am pleased to see her interest in education early in her term as the member for Waite. I am pleased to advise

the committee that we have made a considerable election commitment in this respect and that is in regard to autism lead teachers in all our public primary schools.

I say from the outset that if the Premier were here he would agree that we were both staggered—and I suspect the member for Morialta would agree with me on this—by the number of parents who came up to us at all manner of community events such as weekend sport or a school production on a week night, or contacted us by email and social media, talking about the struggles they were having getting support for their child who was on the spectrum.

When we were in opposition, we were generally overwhelmed by the number of people who raised that with us, so we turned our mind pretty quickly to what we could offer if we were fortunate enough to win the state election.

We started that process by hosting a range of community forums that the Premier, the Minister for Human Services and I attended, along with local members and stakeholders, and I think the member for Badcoe might have been at some of those as well, where we sat around in a circle and allowed parents of kids with autism to speak about their experiences and about what kind of support they felt they needed to have more positive experiences in our education system and to feel like their kids were getting the quality of education that they were promised.

That was the genesis of the announcement for the lead teachers, and I want to acknowledge the work that the Deputy Premier did on this. She has a huge policy brain, and we really tasked her in no small way with going away and, I guess, getting into the granular detail from those forums and then trying to turn it into something practical that would really help.

I was keen, as we always are but particularly on this one, on making an offering that did not just tick the box in terms of being able to say to the South Australian public before the election that, yes, we have a policy on autism, but focus on something that, if we were fortunate enough to have the opportunity to actually implement it, would make change, and that is how we landed on lead teachers. At the end of 2021, there were nearly 5,000 students with an autism diagnosis in mainstream schools that received additional funding.

Students with a diagnosis of autism may have co-occurring diagnoses such as intellectual disability, physical or sensory impairments or a medical condition such as diabetes or epilepsy. Members of this place will know that those kids are unfortunately all too often over-represented in the data about kids who are excluded from school, and we have seen that in successive reports. It is not particular to South Australia; it is occurring globally. We know that schools are also crying out for assistance in wanting to be able to offer a better quality education and more support to those kids.

I feel for the SSOs, classroom teachers and support workers who are there to offer that extra assistance to kids with autism in mainstream schools. Often, they are incredibly frustrated and feel let down that they do not have the support around them to be able to do that, because at the end of the day they are the ones who bear the brunt from parents. It is not politicians like me who get to make these decrees in ivory towers: it is people out in the field who have to wear the ramifications of a lack of support, and I acknowledge the work that those people do.

We announced lead teachers for all our public primary schools, including reception to year 12 schools and envisage the role of that lead teacher will be to provide support to their colleagues at the school on how to best support and educate students with autism. I was really, really firm that this needed to be part of the role, because this was recurring feedback that we got at the forums—to be a point of contact for parents, carers and teachers.

The thing that I heard almost more than anything else from parents was that they did not know where to go. They would speak to one person at the school, who would pass them on to someone else, who might pass them on to the regional education office or the education director, or you might end up talking to an MP.

I do not apportion blame for that. I think it is just a symptom of the system being stressed and not having the resources there to actually allow someone to focus on the role of being the contact for that parent, to say, 'I understand the issues you have raised. I understand the urgency and thus

doing something about this. I can be the person you speak to on these matters. We can sit down face to face and talk about your child's education.'

I guess the third broad point is to drive autism policy and practice that work best for their school. The autism lead teacher commitment is part of an overarching plan for students with autism, which is also committed to:

- increasing the number of autism qualified staff in preschools;
- working with service providers, including Autism SA to offer early intervention services in children's centres;
- developing a state autism strategy that operates with the State Disability Inclusion Plan and requiring all government agencies to sign up to the Autism Friendly Charter, an initiative of Autism SA—and I note their advocacy in this area; and
- investing \$50 million to fund 100 additional speech pathologists, occupational therapists, psychologists and counsellors for the public school system. I note that providing the money is not so much the challenge in that area, as it will be making sure we find the people to fill those roles.

This commitment is about putting resourcing directly in the hands of primary schools. The cost that we have put towards this is largely accounted for by backfilling the teachers who will perform the role of lead autism teachers, so there is of course someone in the classroom teaching kids, while that person goes away and performs all these really important roles. I know that members in this place will know that the parents who have kids on the spectrum who are really struggling to get the support they need are also incredibly—'stubborn' is not a fair word.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Enthusiastic.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: 'Enthusiastic' is a better word because they are doing what any parent would do, and I commend them for that. But they ain't going away when they come to you and ask for help, and that will mean a lot of phone calls and meetings for the lead teacher, but it is something that needs to happen. They need to be heard.

We need to offer support to the schools so that it is not classroom teachers in mainstream schools who have a number of students with autism who are continually diverted away from that duty to try to offer that additional support but that we have someone else onsite who can do it. I thank the member for the question.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 186. The highlights refer to the VET for School Students policy. Is the government going to maintain the model of Flexible Industry Pathways created under the former government?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: The advice I had from the department very early in the piece was that we think the Flexible Industry Pathways is a positive change. I think that I am trying to take an approach as minister—I will say not unlike the attitude of the former minister—not to come in with a flamethrower and vindictively burn everything to the ground that was done by the last mob because that does not serve anyone. I have not done that and I do not intend to do that.

Given the feedback I have had from the agency around this, we think it is positive. All I would say is that we probably just want to look at it in terms of how it will interface with things like the technical colleges to make sure that it all comes together cohesively. Professor Westwell wants to add a few extra words to that as well.

Prof. WESTWELL: Building on what has gone on in the past are the quality courses connected to industry and the demands of industry because we know those pathways are important for our students. We are retaining that focus on quality and connection to pathways into South Australian industries, absolutely.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: In relation to the policy, in addition to the Flexible Industry Pathways, and I thank the minister for the answer and indeed its content, some other enabling work was done to support the Flexible Industry Pathways. I am going to run through a few examples. You can answer as many of them as you like: the embedding of VET in years 7 and 10, for example; the

World of Work Challenge; the Student Pathways website and its associated e-portfolio; and the career counselling strategy work, which was announced at the beginning of this year. Is the government going to continue those strands of the VET for School Students policy as well?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I thank the member for the question. I can say from the outset that I have certainly had no conversations with anyone around ceasing any of that activity. As I said in answer to the previous question, if I am told by the department that we think it is working then I would accept their advice.

Also in line with what I said before, given that we are building these five technical colleges, I want to make sure that the offerings you just mentioned interface nicely with that and work in well, but I do not anticipate that we are coming in to remove those programs. Certainly I have had no discussion of that nature with the department.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: How many school-based apprentices and trainees are there currently?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I think I saw that figure somewhere in my 10,000 briefs. I might take it on notice, but I can tell you that to date, in 2022, over 4,000 government school students have commenced VET pathways, including school-based apprenticeships or traineeships. I will take your specific question on notice and come back to you with an answer.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: This may be added to those on notice, but what is the government's target for numbers of school-based apprentices and trainees in the years to come?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Yes, we will take that on notice as well, thank you.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: The minister answered earlier, or maybe it was the chief executive, that you were expecting 200 students to be enrolled at the new Findon High School technical college. Is there is a target or a KPI for how many additional trainees and apprentices are anticipated to be engaged through the new technical colleges over and above those who would have been undertaking this pathway through their original schools?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: As I think I said in my answer to that earlier question, it may be 200, depending on the model we choose. In terms of a target, I envisage that we will have one, but we do not have it yet. When we do, and when we get to that point, I will happily speak about that in greater detail.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I have one more question on this area. There was a defence, space and cyber careers expo established last year as part of this body of work. Will that be continuing in this year and in future years?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I think no decision has been made either way. Certainly there has been no directive from me. I am confident that similar will take place at the very least, if not the same, but no indication has been given by me or anyone else that that would not be the case.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Can I move to page 188, expenses, which covers a great many things. Can the minister advise the house whether the new government will continue the program of works identified in the department's response to the Graham report into suspensions, exclusions and expulsions, including the \$15 million commitment within the department's budget?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I might let Dr Croser-Barlow make some comments on that, as she is expert on the matter.

Dr CROSER-BARLOW: The program of works is planned to continue, including the \$15 million allocation. We have extended the time period over which that \$15 million allocation will be allocated, so it is going out to two further years, which will enable us to trial the Positive Behaviour for Learning program, which was a big part of that initiative. That will enable that to run an additional two years in that process. The program of work is continuing.

We are also looking to see the impact of some of the new commitments, particularly in relation to autism lead teacher. We are really interested to see the impact on that in relation to R-2 exclusions, which you know was a particular area of focus of the Graham review. We know that students with autism are over-represented in those exclusions in those early years. We are going to

be tracking really closely whether the introduction of an autism lead teacher in every primary school will impact on those exclusionary disciplines, so the answer is yes.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Can I ask what the original time frame for that expenditure of \$50 million was going to be?

Dr CROSER-BARLOW: My understanding is that it was over the four years. We will take it on notice, but I am pretty sure it was four years and we have just rolled it out into two years beyond the four years.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: In the new program of expenditure that is anticipated for that \$15 million, what is the annual expenditure expected in each of the now six years that this program of response is coming?

Dr CROSER-BARLOW: We will take that on notice.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Is the department maintaining the responses to each of the recommendations that were initially provided under the former government, or is the new government changing any of the proposed responses?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I might allow Dr Croser-Barlow to answer this one.

Dr CROSER-BARLOW: As you may recall, there were two responses to the Professor Graham report. In the first instance, the former government released an interim response, which provided in-principle responses to each of the individual recommendations. As you may recall, there were a number of recommendations, a very large number of recommendations. In the subsequent statement the former minister made to the parliament, that was distilled into the \$15 million commitment, which identified, from memory, five to six key areas of work for progressing in relation to the Graham review. Those five to six key areas of work remain the focus areas of the work program going forward.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I thank Dr Croser-Barlow for her answer, and I might just add, member for Morialta, that I fully appreciate the importance of this work. It is something that is raised with me by principal associations regularly. I can say, for schools that probably have a disproportionate number of people who may have been in the flexible learning options program, about the importance of getting this piece of work right. That will come as no surprise to you. I am sure you felt exactly the same way. It is a big body of work, and I want to make sure that we get it right.

No doubt, whatever the model we end up with we will be, for better or worse, stuck with for some time. We are conscious of its importance and committed to making sure that we liaise with all those stakeholders, in terms of getting something that is not just decided to be the best option by ministers or departments but also what it is decided to be or thought to be the best model by teachers and leaders and the ones who actually have to use whatever it is we put in place.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: My recollection is that one of the early initiatives planned under this body of work was professional development opportunities for teachers in mainstream settings to enhance their inclusive education practice. I might be misstating that slightly, or I might be using the wrong language. Are there any professional development opportunities that are coming out of this body of work that planned to be rolled out?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Go for it, Dr Croser-Barlow.

Dr CROSER-BARLOW: The elements that were to be included in this body of work were the school-wide positive behaviour for learning, which we were implementing into 40 schools. Is that the particular one you refer to?

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Yes, that is the one I was thinking of.

Dr CROSER-BARLOW: So, yes, that is still commencing. We have begun recruitment of schools for the early implementation of that, recognising that we are mindful of not adding additional workload to schools during this time of COVID. Our target is still to have 40 schools trained in the intensive management of positive behaviour for learning over the next two years.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: In a similar vein, one of the bodies of work particularly of interest to many schools and to non-government associations as well is the proposed decommissioning of the flexible learning options model and its replacement with a new model. Is that still the plan, or is that one of the matters that is being rolled out over a more extended period of time?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I am told there has been no change to the time lines and that we were always planning on consulting this year, and that is still the case.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: What is the time frame on that consultation? When will there be director/stakeholder consultation for all interested stakeholders and is there going to be broader community consultation as part of that as well?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I am told it is currently underway, member for Morialta.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: When will that consultation period conclude?

Dr CROSER-BARLOW: My understanding is that it is an iterative co-design process. Pam Kent is leading the work in relation to this, and she is looking to have a first set of recommendations in relation to this ready in July of this year.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Is the government going to create an education ombudsman?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: There are no plans, I am told, member for Morialta.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: A new position.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I have not heard that question for a while. That brings back some memories, I tell you.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I refer to page 187, targets. I think that this is referenced in about five places in the budget, but I would like to talk about Adelaide Botanic High School. One of the targets is listed as expanding the Adelaide High School zone, which is obviously in line with Labor's election commitment from 2024. Has the minister received any advice in relation to pressures on the capacity of Adelaide High School and Adelaide Botanic High School to meet the needs of the population in its soon to be expanded zone? Can the minister provide a commitment to those school communities that their special interest language, sports and health science programs will not be affected?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: It is an important question. I might give a little bit of context, first regarding the commitment that has been made to Adelaide Botanic High School and Roma Mitchell Secondary College and, secondly, regarding a number of suburbs in the member for Badcoe's area. Before the state election, the then government made an announcement of about \$98 million in capital works funding for Adelaide Botanic High School to create an extra 700 places. I am happy to say that construction is still expected to start in September of this year.

We are currently doing some work, which I am sure the member is aware of, with Adelaide City Council and the Park Lands Authority to try to achieve a land swap so there is no net loss of open space, given the location of Adelaide Botanic High School and the land constraints that exist there and the fact that this will sit on the Parklands. The other part to this expansion announcement was \$21 million in capital works for Roma Mitchell Secondary College to increase capacity by 300, with construction expected to start by March 2023.

We matched those two commitments by the former government. The point of difference, of course, to which the member refers is that we (the royal we), the then Malinauskas Labor opposition, the now government, committed to reinstating those suburbs and part suburbs that had been cut in 2019 from that shared zone after some very strong advocacy from local members, including the formidable member for Badcoe.

We decided that, given this was a commitment to spend just shy of \$120 million of taxpayers' money to expand these two great schools to the tune of 1,000 places, the fair thing for us to do was to make sure that enabled those suburbs and part suburbs in that area that had been excised from the shared zone to come back in.

Yes, that will create pressure on enrolment capacity at those two sites. The department is currently preparing advice, I am told, which I intend to take to cabinet, about what those pressures might look like. I do not have that advice from them yet. Nonetheless, we remain committed to meeting our election commitment to the people in those areas and allow them to have again the choice of sending their children to either Adelaide Botanic High School or Adelaide High School.

I think it is important to note, and it will come as no surprise to people in this chamber, that many people who live in the CBD, or the inner ring around the shared zone, make decisions and choices around the purchase of a house routinely based on making sure there is access in the long term for their children to go to those two schools.

We remain committed to meeting our commitment to have the suburbs come back in. I think by 2024 is when we have said that we will have those open again. The changed zone will apply to new enrolments for the start of 2024, and year 6 families in the areas will be able to register their interest in the first half of next year.

The work to which I referred, which goes to the heart of the member for Morialta's question, around how that is implemented and what pressures it might bring to bear on the special interest programs—I know there are very large ones at Adelaide High and smaller but not insignificant ones at Adelaide Botanic High School—is being prepared at the moment. I hope to receive that advice soon.

The CHAIR: Member for Badcoe, you have a supplementary?

Ms STINSON: Thank you, Mr Chair. Thank you very much for outlining that, minister. As you are obviously aware, this is a matter of incredible interest to my electorate. I was very pleased to join parents across my electorate, and also the member for West Torrens' electorate, to fight for the return of the city school zone, which they were promised many years ago. Thank you so much for the work that has been done on that.

I understand you have just outlined that 2024 will be the year when enrolments begin again into that city school zone. I wonder whether you might be able to provide some information or comfort to my community in relation to whether there are plans for consultation or engagement with families in my community ahead of that. Of course, many families have questions in relation to transitional arrangements and how the new zone will work, and I have of course been advocating for that communication to happen with my community as the plans come together.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I thank the member Badcoe for the question and thank her again for the advocacy that she provided, along with other members, including the member for West Torrens, who is an old scholar of Adelaide High School. I am pleased to reiterate in no small part the answer I gave the member for Morialta about our intention, our election commitment, which we will meet, to allow into the shared CBD zone the suburbs and part suburbs that cut across the seats of Badcoe and West Torrens. They include the previously zoned suburbs of Glandore, Hilton, Kurrulta Park, Marleston, Mile End, Richmond, Torrensville, Black Forest and Clarence Park.

We intend to commence work on the expansion of Adelaide Botanic High School, which will create an additional 700 places, in September of this year, so that is not long away, with a view to those places being live and in the system by 2024. The work to create an extra 300 places at Roma Mitchell Secondary College will commence in March of 2023. That is the other part of the solution to increasing the capacity in and around the shared CBD zone to enable us to bring those suburbs I mentioned before back in. That work is starting in March of 2023.

We are pleased to confirm for the member for Badcoe that registered interest of enrolment from parents who wish to send their kids to either Adelaide Botanic High School or Adelaide High School will be able to commence in 2023, so not far away. We are going to do some significant work, which I know the member herself has asked for, in terms of holding community information sessions.

Obviously, there is an incredible amount of interest from those suburbs which were excised and which we have announced will come back in. We intend on doing work with those communities to explain how that will work to make sure they are clear on how they express their interest in enrolments. I look forward to having more to say on that soon, I hope. Again, I thank the member for

advocating for what I think is a great outcome, particularly for the suburbs in the seats of Badcoe and West Torrens.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: The minister, in his earlier answer, identified the desirability of these schools for people in those suburbs and, of course, the suburbs that have always been in the Adelaide High School shared zone. I put it to the minister that one of the reasons these schools are so desirable is the special interest programs that are at the core of what those schools see as their particular role within the public education system.

My understanding of the minister's earlier answer is that he has acknowledged there are significant capacity pressures as a result of moving those suburbs back within the zone, and the department is currently preparing advice which the minister may take to cabinet in relation to the special interest programs. Are there any other potential solutions on the table in relation to solving this capacity problem other than a reduction or complete cancellation of those special entry programs?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I thank the member for the question. I would like to say from the outset that, yes, I accept and agree with the member that part of the attraction at those schools is and has been their special interest programs. It is my desire, as the minister, to preserve those wherever we can. I know the schools are keen on that as well.

In terms of other solutions on the table, we will look at all options once I have that advice, to which you referred, from the agency. It has also been a long-running issue in our system, though, that we want to build the same or similar kind of capacity for special interest programs like the ones run at Adelaide High School and Adelaide Botanic High School in schools outside the shared CBD zone. Certainly I would like to see that, given the incredible interest and enrolment pressure that has come to bear on Adelaide Botanic High School in the very short time after it was built and opened.

I guess we could potentially keep building schools in the CBD zone—and they may well keep filling up—but that is not necessarily a long-term answer in terms of having access to things like cricket and rowing which, from memory, is Adelaide High School, and I think it is health sciences at Adelaide Botanic High School. I know from the people I speak to in my community in the north-east that many of them would like to see similar specialist programs and offerings for their kids in other parts of the state as well, and I know it is the same in regional areas.

I will do my utmost to preserve these for these schools, because I know that is the desire of the schools and the principals. I accept the member's comment that it is in no small part a reason behind the attractiveness of those schools to families as well. We will look at whatever solutions the department might put on the table for me about how we can do that and meet our commitment to reinstate those suburbs back into the shared zone.

I also really want to focus my attention, as minister, on how we can build a similar kind of capacity into the public education system to offer those kinds of specialist programs in areas out of the CBD zones so that they might be accessible to a greater range of South Australian families.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: The reinstatement of the suburbs in question to the Adelaide High School-Adelaide Botanic High School shared zone will have a consequential reduction in the size of the zones for Unley High School, Plympton International College and Underdale High School. Will there be any consequential adjustments for those school zones expanding elsewhere other than these reductions, or is the government proposing to leave these schools with those reduced school zones?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: A good question, member for Morialta. I am told there are no plans to make changes over and above the change that would enable the suburbs I mentioned to go back into the shared CBD zone. However, as I am sure you remember, Mr Temperly is the guru, so to speak, on these matters, so I might allow him to add a few comments to my answer.

Mr TEMPERLY: Through the minister, just confirming that, yes, there are no other planned zone changes as a consequence of expanding the CBD zone. We do monitor enrolment capacity and enrolment demand across the whole system continuously. We update our enrolment forecast on a six-monthly basis to review where there are emerging capacity pressures across the whole system.

Zone change is one policy response we might consider, although it is a measure that we obviously do not take lightly because of the impact on parents and families. We are not ruling out zone change at any point in the future, but certainly there is no planned contemplation of zone changes beyond the CBD shared zone at this point.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: If I could add one more thing to that, and the member for Badcoe will correct me if I am wrong. She is in regular contact with me—and I am putting that mildly—about the school issues in her area. I am pretty sure she may have informed me that Plympton International College is currently at capacity. I am not saying that this applies to all those schools the member for Morialta asked about, but in terms of that one at least it might help us create a little bit more capacity to meet the existing demand there.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: My recollection is that it is only in the last few years that it has had that opportunity to have that broad subject choice in those senior secondary years, and I think that the students there have been enjoying it. Can the minister identify whether the government can give a commitment to families in the zones of schools like Henley High School, Brighton Secondary School, Seaton and Woodville that are potentially adjacent to the school zones of these school zones in question that none of those families in Brighton, Henley, Seaton, Woodville or other schools will have their zones reduced?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: There is no intention to change those zones.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Are there any school zones around South Australia at primary school or high school level where the government is currently considering changing zones?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I am informed there are currently no zone changes in addition to the CBD shared zone that are being contemplated.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Can I take us to page 188, FTEs, and there is a mighty lot of them, as there should be. In relation to Labor's election commitment 'to increase the percentage of permanent teachers by at least 10 per cent', can the minister advise the committee what the parameters the government has set itself for achieving that commitment are? For example, are we talking about between March 2022 and March 2026 to see that increase? How will the government determine whether or not it has fulfilled its commitment?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I might give a little bit of context around this particular election commitment which, as the member for Morialta correctly states, is to increase the percentage of permanent teachers by at least 10 per cent to give greater employment certainty and demonstrate the way we value them and value the role they play.

I might also add that the genesis of the commitment came about from discussions a number of people had had for many years, primarily with principals who (and this will not come as news to the member for Morialta) felt a degree of frustration when a young—not always young; that is a generalisation—contract staff member in their school, for instance, whom they would deem to be a star, had to make way for someone with permanency who was using their right of return to come back into that school. They felt that they wanted the choice to be able to keep that person.

This announcement is in no small part about providing certainty for people who are stuck on contracts who, in the next few years more than ever before, are going to really feel the pinch in terms of their ability to secure mortgages and things like that, given what is happening with property prices and given that it is harder to do that when you are a contract teacher compared with a person with permanency.

It was not just about that. It was also about our trying to do what we could and use the levers available to us to try to reduce churn in the system on the assumption (and of course we will test this) that if we had a higher level of permanency there might be fewer instances—and this goes hand in glove with our commitment to extend the regional allowance—where teachers choose to use a right of return, and therefore less pressure is applied on principals to accommodate someone on that right of return and forgo the services of a teacher on a contract they would like to teach.

In terms of the implementation, we are still working on that. That work is being done right now. I will pass over to Professor Westwell to add some more comments to my answer.

Prof. WESTWELL: In terms of the 10 per cent increase, what that does is provide that certainty for teachers around employment. We also want to make sure that those permanent teachers can have the biggest impact in the system, so we are currently providing advice on what that might look like, how that might be achieved and what the time lines might be associated with that.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I appreciate the information. When I was the minister, my recollection is that the department advised me that the number of teachers in the system who had permanency was in the order of 80 per cent. What advice has the department provided the minister, or can the minister just flat out tell us what the percentage of teachers is who are permanent in the public education system at the moment, or potentially the March 2022 date, the election date, would be the appropriate date on which that would be most useful?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I am told that the percentage of permanency across the preschool, primary and secondary systems is 80 per cent. I will also note there is some conjecture from other stakeholders, the AEU being one of those, about whether that level is 80 or a lower level, but the advice I have from the department is 80 per cent across school and preschool settings.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: The commitment is for a 10 per cent increase, which can be read one of two ways: we could be talking about 10 per cent of the 80 or 10 per cent from 80 to 90. Presumably either 80 per cent to 88 per cent or 80 per cent to 90 per cent is the target the government has set itself by the time we get to the next election. Can the minister confirm the target? Is it to get to 88 per cent or to get to 90 per cent, or is the minister preferring to hold off on setting a target until other stakeholders have made their suggestions to the minister on how his target should be conceived?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: My answer is that the department will undertake policy work to identify where the level of teacher permanency can be increased—the conversation I just had with the chief executive is that that is somewhat complex in nature—whilst still maintaining flexibility for schools and preschools to manage their staffing needs. I am not going to give you a figure now, but there is work being done now.

I guess the announcement we made was to stay at 10 per cent for the obvious reason—that, because there is disagreement in some parts of the sector around whether the existing figure is 70 or whether the existing figure is 80, and I think there are other estimates given as well, we provide evidence of our commitment to secure work and permanency for teachers by stating it as a 10 per cent figure, instead of stating it as a final figure. I am sure once that work is done there is more that we will be able to say on that.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Does the government plan on maintaining all the existing industrial entitlements available to permanent teachers as part of this push for permanency, in particular in relation to their entitlements around placement rights?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I will let Professor Westwell provide some additional comments, but I can say that there has been no discussion from me at any point in terms of reducing entitlements. Is there anything you would like to add to that?

Prof. WESTWELL: There are no plans for any significant changes there. We want to get that balance right between maintaining flexibility for schools and preschools to manage their staffing needs as well as increasing that level of permanency, so those are some of the policy issues that we are working through right now.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: When is the government going to commence formal negotiations in relation to the next EB?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I am told that the South Australian School and Preschool Education Staff Enterprise Agreement 2020 will nominally expire on 23 March next year. The agreement will continue to be in force until it is superseded by a new enterprise agreement, which is what the member is referring to, or until it is rescinded. The last salary increase under the enterprise agreement was applied on 1 May this year. Under that, leaders received a 3.35 per cent increase and all other employees covered by the enterprise agreement received 2.35 per cent.

In terms of the specific question from the member, though, about when negotiations on a new agreement will commence, I think in terms of the process that is generally applied here parties to the enterprise agreement may commence negotiations for a new agreement six months prior to its nominal expiry, which is 23 March.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Who will be the minister responsible for overseeing that negotiation?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: It will be the Minister for Industrial Relations, who is also the Attorney-General. He will be responsible for central management of enterprise bargaining across the public sector.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I take you to page 187 and the target in relation to commence planning to implement the government's seven-point plan for quality teaching, etc. Point 4 in that plan is that specialist subjects will be taught by specialist teachers, and I quote:

A Malinauskas Labor Government will create a workforce plan that places teachers in subjects they are qualified to teach and creates incentives for teachers to gain qualifications in specialist subjects.

What is being done to put that election promise into effect?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Yes, this is one of the points in our seven-point teaching quality plan, to increase the number of specialist teachers teaching specialist subjects. Again, it is an issue that is brought to my attention regularly, particularly in regional areas. It was brought to my attention just two weeks ago at Mount Gambier in relation to Mount Gambier High School, from memory.

It is not a new issue. It has been an issue under the last government and the government before that. I acknowledge that it is a particularly difficult one to fix given the nature of South Australia in terms of being a very large state geographically with a relatively small population. That means that if we do have schools in our regional and remote areas we have schools with small numbers of students.

I give a shout-out here to Kongorong, which I visited on the recent country cabinet and which has 26 kids. Specialist teachers are obviously not so much an issue at a primary school, but the challenge really is how we offer the same consistency of courses, or subjects in this case, regardless where students go to school. How do we attract specialist teachers to be able to move to areas or stay in areas like that, or in some cases encourage them to study teaching and specialise and then move back to the regional area in which they grew up?

It is tricky. I know that probably in all jurisdictions in Australia this is an issue, but I think that in states like South Australia it is particularly tricky to get this done. In terms of answering the member's specific question, we are going to create a workforce plan with the aim in that, of course, of having more teachers who are actually qualified to teach in specialist areas. We have already had discussions on all the election commitments. The department was quick to organise those sit-downs and longer conversations around how we envisage delivering on all the election commitments we have made, and the department has already turned its mind to how we do this.

There are some immediate opportunities that have been pleasingly suggested or highlighted by the department in terms of how we particularly meet this one. The member for Morialta will, of course, be familiar with Orbis, which is down at Hindmarsh. I am not sure what it used to be called but it was not Orbis back in the day.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: It is a new initiative that was started in 2019, I think.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Okay. I thought we always had training at Hindmarsh, but anyway. Orbis is a very impressive name—the professional learning academy for educational leaders and teachers. The capacity of Orbis, of course, provides an opportunity for us to leverage that in-house training, I guess you can refer to it in some respects, as provided by the department to upskill teachers into having specialist subjects.

That is one of the early opportunities that has been identified by the department, namely, designing and implementing a process to assess existing teachers—and this is something I had a conversation about at the highly accomplished lead teachers conference, I think—about the opportunities that exist for many teachers across our education system who already probably have

specialist subject knowledge based on their pedagogical content knowledge that would enable them to be a specialist but who have probably not been through the process to be categorised or qualified as such.

So it is work we can do in terms of acknowledging those expert and specialist skills which already exist in the system and which are acknowledged by our specialist teacher, Monica. They are the two immediate pieces of action that the department has identified can be done in terms of getting on the front foot and delivering this.

The department will also work to focus course intakes on subject specialisations aligned to this commitment and explore innovative models for specialist curriculum delivery. We are committed to delivering this in this term of government nonetheless. I might ask Professor Westwell to add some remarks because it is an area of interest to him. Perhaps he can add a few more things about how we will do this and the importance of doing it.

Prof. WESTWELL: It is certainly about making the most of the expertise that we have in the public education system, recognising that, revealing that and making sure that we have those educators teaching in those areas, and also about the recruitment of the future workforce and the strategy.

Working with the initial teacher education providers to put emphasis in that area will be a focus for us as well. Where that is not possible, or while we are working on that, we also have some fantastic examples in South Australia where schools are working together where they have specialist teachers to make sure that those specialist teachers can actually engage with a broader set of students. The local delivery model on Eyre Peninsula is one example of how schools are working in partnership to make sure that there are specialist teachers teaching in specialist subjects.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I appreciate all the comments from the minister and the chief executive and their nuance. The election document did not have as much nuance. A quote from it:

Too often, students are being taught by a teacher who hasn't trained in that subject. This must end. Mathematics should be taught by people qualified in mathematics; this is the same for language, English and arts teachers.

The minister talked about the plan that the department is working on, the workforce plan. When will that plan be finished, when will it be released and will it have the ending of non-specialist maths teachers and non-specialist arts and language and English teachers as a KPI for that plan, or are the department and the government now saying that it is possibly a bit more difficult than that?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I might pass over, just briefly, for an answer from Professor Westwell on this, but I think we are going to be taking probably the bulk of that question on notice and come back to you with an answer, member for Morialta.

Prof. WESTWELL: Picking up the point about the qualified educators, one of the things that we know is that we have primary educators. When they go into primary education, they might not have a specialisation, they might not have, for example, a degree in science, yet as professionals and through their professional development what they do is build incredible expertise.

We would consider those educators to be, for example, qualified to be specialist science teachers in primary schools, and that extends through to the middle years as well. So really focusing on supporting those educators in the primary years and the middle years to become qualified teachers is a really important part of this. What we also know, for example, with maths educators is that people who may have degrees in mathematical disciplines, like engineering or physics or something like that—while they might not have a mathematics degree—are expert mathematics educators and bring a lot to the public education system.

We are really focusing on how we make sure that we are really using that capacity and developing capacity overall. So it is maximising that capacity, maximising the number of students who have access to those kinds of educators and understanding in our system who those educators are, how they are deployed and how we might deploy them differently.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Just to confirm, the minister will take the rest of the question on notice?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I shall.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Can I take us to Budget Paper 5, page 26, the local school infrastructure project. I see Bill sitting in the background; I do not want him to be in any way feeling like we are not interested in his work. The item on page 26 talks about \$26.6 million for the school upgrades at 19 sites, including Avenues College, \$4 million; Westport Primary, \$4 million; and Yankalilla Area School, \$200,000. It does not identify the other 16 projects. Can the minister now provide a list of these projects and how much funding each is receiving?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I will take that on notice and come back to the member.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Has the government determined which 16 sites are to benefit from this funding, and how much funding each of those 16 sites is to receive?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I understand that, yes, we have the amounts budgeted for each of those sites. I am almost certain they have all been publicly announced as well, but I am happy to come back to you with that.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: If they have been publicly announced, then does that funding include, for example, \$1 million for The Pines School for a new gymnasium?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: We will take that on notice and come back to you with a list of the projects.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Does the funding include \$3 million for Edwardstown Primary School?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: We can do this on every one but, yes, we will come back to you with a list.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Does the funding include \$4.5 million for the Ceduna Area School disability unit?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: My advice is that that one is not on the list, but I am confident that we are close, collectively, to being able to announce a fix, if I can call it that, for that site.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: We wish you well. Does the funding include money for Taillem Bend Primary School and Coomandook Area School to replace their very old transportable classrooms?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: We will take that on notice, member for Morialta.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: What is the status of the work at Kapunda High School, following the devastating fire earlier this year?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Thank you, member, for that important question. I was pleased to be joined by the member for Morialta and the recently elected member for Frome on 30 or 31 March, I recall, because it was my birthday—and what better way to spend it than by inspecting the very sad ruins of a historical building, in this case, the Eringa building. I can give the member an update on where things are in terms of trying to rebuild that very important part of South Australia's history.

The fire was on 29 March. It resulted in substantial damage to several buildings and ICT infrastructure, including Eringa, which is a heritage-listed building formerly owned by Mr Sidney Kidman. I understand a couple of members at least in the current cabinet, including the Minister for Tourism and the Minister for Trade, went to school there. They were both in contact with me straight after the news broke to talk about the significance of the building and why it was important that I went up there, which I did.

The latest advice I have is that the cause is still unknown, but I can provide an update in terms of what we expect the remediation costs to be. The current estimate is \$15 million. The financing authority appointed McLarens Holdings, which is a major loss adjuster, and Imparta Engineers, who have significant experience in the assessment and restoration of fire-damaged heritage sites which, as the member for Morialta will know, is the real complication here.

I had a number of conversations with staff and community members about the significance of the building, some of the things that were lost in there and also the incredible efforts in more recent years to bring it back to a state that closely resembled how Mrs Kidman had it when they resided in the property. It goes to the tragedy of the fire, too, that some incredible bespoke works took place, right down to having tiles potentially manufactured to match the ones that Mrs Kidman had put in place that could no longer be purchased, to bring it up to spec. That has been lost, of course, and it has provided a spanner in the works, so to speak, in terms of getting an accurate quote on what it will cost to rebuild it. Nonetheless, we are making progress.

The infrastructure that was lost was not just Eringa but also a general teaching and art building, known as building 14, and a home economics building, known as building 15. We are still waiting to hear from SAPOL and the metropolitan fire team about the cause of the fire. Building 14, which was the general teaching and art building, has now been demolished. Building 15, which was home economics, has been repaired and is being used by the school again.

The cost to date for the clean-up and to make Eringa safe so it will not be a risk to anyone on the site, including some security to make sure that people do not come and cause more damage, is already over \$160,000, which is a considerable cost in itself. The specialist task of cleaning up the damage and salvaging parts for reinstatement, in line with engineering and Heritage SA advice, is expected to exceed \$300,000. Works will begin once State Commission Assessment Panel approval is obtained.

As I said on the day, when I had a chance to speak to the community, who were obviously deeply upset about what had happened, we are committed to rebuilding as close to what was there as we possibly can. This government acknowledges the significance of the site, in terms of not just its importance to the school but its significance to generations of people who have grown up in Kapunda.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: While we are on infrastructure, I have some questions on page 181. There is a list of projects under the title 'Other investment projects'. I think these are largely ones that were announced in last year's state budget. In relation to those projects at Eastern Fleurieu, Elliston, Morialta, Nailsworth, Pimpala, Salisbury East and Seaview Downs—I have a feeling there might be one other, but I could be mistaken—could the minister advise if there have been any changes to the time frame for the delivery of those projects since the election?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Member for Morialta, I will make some reflections before handing over to Mr Glasgow to provide a bit more commentary. I am told by Mr Bernardi that we can get a list for you, but I can say as minister that, to the best of my knowledge, I have not received any advice or briefings of changes to time lines to any of those projects. I am happy to come back to you with a more solid answer. I have even better news: Mr Glasgow tells me they are still on target.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: That is great. I note that there is a significant drop in the budget for the capital works assistance scheme. This is the line below, under annual programs. Last year, there was \$858,000 in funds made available for schools. While that does not appear to have been fully subscribed by the estimated result, there is a pretty significant further drop to only \$155,000 this year. My experience was that this scheme was pretty useful for schools and for the system. I am wondering if schools are being discouraged from applying for that scheme, or if there is some other explanation for that drop?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: We will take that on notice and come back to you with an answer.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I note that \$1.3 million has been budgeted for school bus replacement, down from \$2.5 million spent last financial year. Has the department provided the minister with any advice as to whether that will be sufficient to meet the needs of regional schools without further investment?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Thank you, member, for the question. I do not think the perennial issue of school buses will ever go away in a state the size of South Australia. As someone who routinely went to school on a school bus from a country area, I certainly understand the importance of making sure they are there and can service communities large and small.

The department's Transport Services Unit is responsible for administering about 429 buses in rural areas in accordance with school transport policy. Of those 429, 65 per cent are operated by school bus operators under contract with the minister and the remainder is operated by the Department for Education-owned yellow school buses. These rural buses transport over 15,000 government, non-government and preschool children to and from schools and preschools on a daily basis, with the buses ranging in size from 21 seats to 57 seats.

The school transport policy ensures that consistent, fair and equitable transport assistance is provided to all students across the state who are isolated by distance from a government school. The Transport Services Unit is also responsible for arranging transport—for instance, taxis, minibuses, hire cars—for students with disability who attend a special school or a special class.

Currently, there are 270 school transport services in operation, primarily around the Adelaide metropolitan area, that cater for roughly 101 students with disability. The department regularly undertakes reviews of the school bus routes to ensure these services operate efficiently and safely to achieve the best use of available resources. The annual budget is \$38 million.

In response to your precise question, though, around the school bus replacement program and the difference between the 2021-22 budget of, I think, \$1.3 million and then it was an estimated result of quite a considerably larger amount of \$2.574 million, and then back to a figure of \$1.3 million, much closer to the budgeted figure for the last financial year, I might pass over to Mr Temperly to add a bit more to my answer.

Mr TEMPERLY: To add to the minister's comments, the department does have a planned bus replacement program. We take into account the condition of the buses and also the lifespan of buses, which differs depending on the bus size. Just last year, we took delivery of 11 new 21-seat Toyota Coaster buses, with six more awaiting production by Toyota. Four Mitsubishi Fuso Rosa 25-seat buses have also been delivered, and we have converted one of those for wheelchair use.

We also have an approved replacement plan to replace the older vehicles into the future, which includes the purchase of the larger 57-seat buses and the continued replacement of the small buses each year, which I mentioned. The budget figures reflect expected replacement costs for the smaller buses. The replacement for larger buses is not reflected in those figures. Typically, in the past we have taken a separate submission to cabinet when we need to replace those larger vehicles.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Can the minister identify how many of those larger vehicles are determined by the department to be in need of replacement over the next four years?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I am informed the department is working on updated advice to me on that very issue now. I have not seen that advice yet, though, member for Morialta.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: In relation to all the investing expenditure, we have the figures here for the 2022-23 budget. My understanding is that all these projects of course have been through a process where there is—if cabinet has approved them, they are in the budget. Is the minister able to provide, presumably on notice, a budgeted expenditure for each project for each year of the forward estimates?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Sorry, member for Morialta, could I have the start of that question again?

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Can the minister provide the budgeted expenditure for each project under the investing expenditure summary for each year of the forward estimates?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: We will take that on notice and get you a list, I understand from Mr Bernardi. It is probably quite a long and detailed list, but we will get it for you.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: In relation to infrastructure works as a result of the voluntary mergers program, how many schools over how many sites have had expressions of interest over the last year? Have there been any valuations; if so, which schools?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I am happy to provide some information for the member. My preliminary answer is that we—that is, myself and the team around me—are not aware of any new sites disposed of since I have become minister, but we are going to check that for you.

Two sites were disposed of in the 2021-22 financial year for, I think, a combined total of \$9.5 million. An amount of \$0.1 million was spent maintaining closed sites in 2021-2022; three sites were acquired in 2021-22 for a total of just under \$1 million, or \$900,000; and, of course, one site is expected to be acquired in 2022-23 for the expansion of Adelaide Botanic High School, but we will get you more specific details.

Membership:

Mrs Hurn substituted for Mr McBride.

Mr FULBROOK: I refer to Budget Paper 5, page 28, and the Tea Tree Gully toy library. Can the minister update the committee about funding for the Tea Tree Gully toy library?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I thank the member for Playford for the question. I am very happy to talk about the Tea Tree Gully Toy Library and the commitments this government has made around supporting it and making sure that more families in the north-eastern suburbs and surrounds are able to access the wonderful services that Lyn Turner, who is the guru and for many years the manager of the Tea Tree Gully toy library, offers to families.

I might say from the outset that the services, in terms of exceptionally low-cost loans of toys for children the toy library—a premises inside the library at the Tea Tree Gully council chambers—provides have probably never been more important than they are now. I know that is a phrase politicians like to bandy around but, given the really acute cost-of-living pressures families are feeling at the moment, with petrol prices (I saw on the way in this morning that diesel is well over \$2) and the cost of fresh fruit and vegetables, property prices, a real issue with rental properties both in being able to access them and the cost of them, it means that families find other areas to cut back on because they have to meet the essentials.

Sadly for the children in those families, sometimes that means not having the same access to toys, and I do not mean the kind of frivolous stuff that you might buy and chuck away but the kind of thing that the Tea Tree Gully Toy Library has in great abundance, which is educational toys for kids from birth up to much higher years that they can play with and learn from.

The commitment that was made by the then Malinauskas Labor opposition during the campaign, when we managed to get the member for Croydon out to the toy library to have a look, joined by the now members for Newland and King, then candidates for those seats, was that we would increase and extend the government-based contribution to \$50,000 if we were successful at the election. We are now set to deliver on that commitment and funding for the toy library has been included in the state budget.

Funding will be provided until the 2025-26 financial year. I am told the extra funding will allow the Tea Tree Gully Toy Library to establish a click-and-collect service and will see the library operate for an extra half day each Monday. That has been an issue that Lyn Turner has been raising with both political parties. I acknowledge that the member for Morialta I think made a commitment in regard to the Tea Tree Gully Toy Library as well, and I acknowledge that. However, Lynn Turner has been talking for many years about what she has perceived to be an inability for the library to meet demand in terms of how often it is open.

It is a very popular toy library and it is very well run. It is situated in a place that gets a considerable amount of foot traffic because people come to the Tea Tree Gully council chambers to have a coffee or to use the library or the internet and hire books, movies and audiobooks. People wander out to Civic Park and have a look around or go over to Tea Tree Plaza. It is well situated, which has meant that demand has continued to grow.

The funding that we are providing will enable the click-and-collect service, which is a method of buying and picking stuff up that has become increasingly popular during the pandemic. Most people in this chamber have probably done a bit of the click and collect. I think there was a lot of click and collect happening at Dan Murphy's through the pandemic, that is for sure. This will enable that service to run as well as extending the opening hours.

The Tea Tree Gully Toy Library has been open since 1979, which is an incredibly long period of time. It has traditionally met its operational costs through a combination of fundraising activities; membership fees, which are very small I can tell you; and in-kind support from the City of Tea Tree Gully. We know how important the early years are. Toy libraries, like the Tea Tree Gully Toy Library, give children access to a much wider range of toys than they would otherwise have.

I can also give a plug for the environment here. Toy libraries are good for the environment. It means that, instead of buying all the kids all the toys, we can have some which are loaned and then, when the child no longer wants to use them or has outgrown them, instead of chucking them in the bin they are there for future generations of young people to use as well. The library caters to children from newborns to 12 years of age. Membership for a family is \$35 a year, but you are able to have unlimited loans for that, as long as it is up to three toys at once for four weeks at a time.

I am very pleased that we are able to deliver this commitment early in the piece because, as I said, cost-of-living pressures are considerable at the moment. This will help with that and make sure that the Tea Tree Gully Toy Library provides a fantastic service for generations of people living in the north-eastern suburbs.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I will take you to page 188, the overarching expenses line. Can the minister advise if the new government will continue the work underway as part of the department's Music Education Strategy?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I thank the member for his question and acknowledge his interest in this program when he was minister and I think probably when he was the shadow minister formerly as well. It is an important part of our offering in schools. I am not a person who is musically gifted, sadly. Other people in my family are but I did not get those skills. However, I acknowledge its importance. The education strategy to which the member for Morialta refers is comprised of seven FTEs: a manager, a senior project officer, one project officer and four music education network field officers.

On 30 November 2018, under the then minister's tenure, the Department for Education launched a 10-year music education strategy aimed at ensuring all children and young people in South Australia have access to a high-quality music education. The strategy aims to enhance existing systems and build capacity to provide better support for general classroom music education, upskill non-specialist teachers and educators to improve the delivery of general classroom music education and provide curriculum resources with a strong focus on primary schools as well.

A South Australian quality music education framework was launched in 2020, defining a set of characteristics for quality music education and providing guidance to a range of stakeholders who were involved in making decisions about music education. Four rounds of the Music Innovation Fund have now been completed, with \$1,027,761 allocated to 106 schools, 37 preschools and 10 external organisations.

A variety of programs and initiatives are also underway, including the delivery of professional development courses, the provision of online music education resources and classroom instruments, student pathway opportunities and new music education curriculum resources.

In terms of the member's specific question, which I understand was in relation to the ongoing operation and function of this strategy, we do not have any changes planned. As the minister, I certainly do not have any changes planned. I would refer to my opening statement about my intention to do my best, wherever I can, to meet the priorities that we have made as election commitments and deliver the vision that we set out before the election, but also keep those things that former governments of all colours have put in place, and I would firmly put this in that category.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Thank you, minister, that was an excellent answer. I commend you.

The CHAIR: An A-plus maybe?

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I will give it an A. Is ongoing funding guaranteed to continue to support the Primary Schools' Music Festival as it enters its 131st year?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: This is a fantastic festival. I could look to a staff member who attended that with me. I think I went to that last year with you.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: We were sitting next to each other.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: We were. Of course I remember that. We had a good old time. It was impressive and I had at least one local school, and the thrill they got from being part of that spectacle, I have to say, was amazing. Even in my time working in the portfolio as a staffer, I do not think I ever got to attend it and I was not really sure what I was going to see when I went on the occasion with the member for Mordialta, the then minister, but I was blown away by the extent of the spectacle and what is put on. Certainly the feedback I got from the local schools in my area that were part of it was that they loved it and the parents absolutely loved it.

For parents who might be trying to decide where their children might go to primary school who see the splash that appears on social media from those schools in their area that compete, it would be a real incentive for them to send their kids there. It is a wonderful thing.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I take you to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 186, the highlights in relation to Clontarf academies. Can the minister confirm the new government will fulfil the department's commitments to Aboriginal students engaged with Clontarf academies around South Australia? I note the budget line confirms there is a three-year agreement to continue the seven academies established during the term of the previous government, with the potential to establish up to eight more. Will those seven currently in place continue and is the government going to continue looking at the establishment of further academies?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I thank the member for the question. I think the first interaction I had with Clontarf was in 2021 at Port Augusta Secondary School when I went up to do a bit of a tour of the area, and that was one of the schools I went to. Clontarf was operating there and certainly the school and the leadership spoke very highly of the work that Clontarf does. It is certainly an area of focus for this government and will be an area of focus for me. There are a range of programs, most of which the member for Mordialta will be very familiar with, that are designed to do work in this space.

I am trying to see whether I have any information specifically on Clontarf. I do not think that I do. I know there have been no conversations that I have been a part of to consider any changes to the existing contract with Clontarf to which you refer. In terms of the second part to that question, member for Mordialta, about whether or not we would consider any expansion, we are always open to that. I do not think anyone has approached me about it yet. I am sure that time will come.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: There is a line underneath in relation to the Shooting Stars program in Whyalla. Can the minister confirm similarly that that work is still underway to pilot the Shooting Stars program in Whyalla for Aboriginal girls?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Yes, it is.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Can I take you to page 188, the overarching expenses line. Will the new government continue to provide support in relation to the International Baccalaureate Diploma pathway for senior secondary students at Unley High School, Norwood International High School, Aberfoyle Park High School and Roma Mitchell college? I am particularly asking about financial support that enables the coordination and delivery of those IB Diploma programs.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I might allow Professor Westwell to answer this question.

Prof. WESTWELL: There are no plans to make any changes to that program at the moment. I think it provides an additional part of the education system. Of course, one of the things that it also provides is a focus on languages, which remains a priority for the department—to support languages across the whole system.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Minister, in relation to Budget Paper 5, page 26, the \$100 materials and services charge subsidy, how many students in our public education system are on School Card, and how many are not and would therefore be eligible to attract the subsidy?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I will give a little bit of context and then answer the member's question as specifically as I can. The School Card obviously is incredibly important. It enables

families who are eligible to forgo the payment of the materials and services charge at the school of their choice.

The current gross annual School Card limit income, which has been updated from 2021, is as follows: if there is one dependent child, roughly \$62½ thousand is the gross annual income limit; two children, \$63½ thousand; three children, \$64½ thousand; four children, 65, closer to \$66,000; five children, just shy of \$67,000; and then for each additional dependent child, that limit can raise by \$1,115. That is also broken down into a weekly School Card income limit, but I will not go into that. That is the context.

I know that when Labor was last in government, one of the things we did was raise those limits. Whilst I am not contemplating doing that and we do not have an election commitment to do it, and given the earlier comments I made around cost of living—and I think most people would be shocked to think that there are so many people who are trying to subsist on such small gross annual incomes of \$62½ thousand or, in the case of four dependants, \$65,785—I acknowledge that it is incredibly important that we have a School Card offering. In terms of the number of people approved, for the 2021 school year, there were 54,562 government students approved for School Card assistance.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Presumably, there are about 120,000 who are not and who will receive the subsidy therefore.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Whether or not they all access it, we of course do not know that. I understand that is what is budgeted

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Has the minister received advice as to whether this expenditure is eligible to be applied toward South Australia's required contribution towards the national school funding agreement towards public school resources?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I might pass over to Mr Chris Bernardi to answer this question.

Mr BERNARDI: We are estimating, as we said, \$12 million for two years, for the 2022 school year, as well as \$12 million for the 2023 school year only. That is around that 120,000 student number. What we are assuming is that, because that is a discount to eligible parents, the payment we are going to be making means that schools will not be out of pocket. Whatever rebate or discount the school gives to a family, we will reimburse that school in total.

From our perspective, that cost the school uses the revenue for is to meet the educational cost of students in our system, and on that basis we are saying that our subsidy to parents is an eligible cost to meet the cost of educating students in our system.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Can I have one more?

The CHAIR: I will be nice to you.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: It is kind of early childhood.

The CHAIR: Okay, go ahead.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Will the new government continue to support the Literacy Guarantee Unit in the department's curriculum and learning directorate and the delivery of the year 1 phonics check, which has been underway for the last four years?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I understand that the answer is yes to both

The CHAIR: The allocated time having expired, I declare the examination of school education complete.

Sitting suspended from 11:31 to 11:45.

Membership:

S.E. Andrews substituted for Ms Hutchesson.

Departmental Advisers:

Prof. M. Westwell, Chief Executive, Department for Education

Mr C. Bernardi, Chief Financial Officer, Department for Education.

Dr C. Croser-Barlow, Executive Director, Support and Inclusion, Department of Education.

Ms N. Atkinson, Director, Early Childhood Services and Strategy, Department of Education.

Ms J. Bray, Head of the Office for the Early Years, Department for Education.

Mr T. Anastasiou, Assistant Director, Budget Management, Department of Education.

The CHAIR: I now open the portfolio of the Department for Education, school education, early childhood development. The minister appearing is the Minister for Education, Training and Skills. Minister do you wish to introduce your advisers and make an opening statement? I will also give that opportunity to the member for Morialta, if he wishes.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I will introduce the people I have with me now. We still have Professor Martin Westwell, the chief executive. We also have, sitting behind me, Mr Chris Bernardi, the chief financial officer and Dr Caroline Croser-Barlow. I am now joined by Jackie Bray, Head of the Office for the Early Years, and Natalie Atkinson, the director for earlier childhood. I do not intend on making an opening statement, as this is a shorter section, and I am happy to go into questions.

The CHAIR: Member for Morialta, the floor is yours.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I refer to page 27, Budget Paper 5, the Royal Commission into Early Childhood Education and Care, \$2 million. When will the government deliver on its election commitment for this Early Childhood Royal Commission?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Do you mean in terms of the commencement or completion?

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I think you can assume that the list of questions I have here includes commencement, completion, appointment and announcement. In terms of reference, provide as much answer as you like in your first answer, and we will get to the rest in subsequent questions.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I am very happy to do that, and I thank the member for Morialta for his guidance. I will perhaps provide a bit of context about what is obviously a very considerable election commitment that was first made right back on October 21 last year by the now Premier, the now Deputy Premier and myself about what we are doing to ensure the support we are providing in the first 1,000 days to our young people in terms of their brain and social development and the significance of those first 1,000 days in terms of how much of that development occurs in that period.

The alarming stats here, I guess, which drive a lot of the investment that governments around the world are making into the early years are that nearly 25 per cent of South Australian five year olds, and the figures are similar indeed for other jurisdictions, start school behind on their developmental milestones. This was the genesis, it is fair to say, for moving to a system of universal preschool for three year olds, which was the election commitment to which the member for Morialta refers.

We committed to a comprehensive inquiry into what can be done to better support families to make South Australia the best place to be born and to grow up. The royal commission, in light of that, will examine services and support provided to families in the crucial first 1,000 days of a child's life, how to best implement the government's commitment to three-year-old preschool and how all families can have access to out-of-school-hours care that works for them.

The recent announcements by the New South Wales and Victorian governments, which no doubt members in this place will be aware of, are for significant investment in the future of their children. The royal commission will examine what works best in the South Australian context, noting that there are differences in how or who provides the preschool for four year olds here currently. The royal commission is really just the first step in transforming the early years system in South Australia. We need expert advice in regard to what that best investment is for our children.

Workforce capacity, as I have said before, will be an important consideration for the royal commission. We need to make sure that we not only keep our skilled and dedicated early childhood educators here but that we develop the workforce we need to transform our early years system. I think the timing is obviously right, given the announcements we have had so far. Victoria have committed to the rollout of three-year-old preschool, as have the ACT as well. New South Wales seem to be heading in that direction and made announcements of pretty significant import in the last week in terms of what they are going to do.

In terms of the royal commission specifically, the government has allocated \$2 million to that royal commission. We want it to start as quickly as it can. I am hopeful that the Premier and I will be able to make an announcement soon about who the royal commissioner will be. That will obviously be a public announcement. We will then straightaway sit down with whoever that person is to discuss with them the scope of the royal commission that I outlined just before and make sure we get their advice on whether anything else needs to be considered in there.

In terms of when it will finish, given that I have said it will start as soon as possible, and I think that will be soon, what we have said publicly (and my departmental people will correct me if I am wrong) was initially 12 to 20 months. I do not envisage us extending that time line. Although no decision has been made, I would envisage us potentially shortening that time line, if anything, to make sure that we have the advice in time to deliver on a commitment we have made about commencement in 2026. I will leave it there and let the member ask another question.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Has the royal commissioner been selected at this stage?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: No.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: How will the royal commissioner be selected, and what sort of person is the government seeking to undertake this work?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Obviously, we would like to have someone with some knowledge of the area. I think that is important. I am not necessarily saying it needs to be what you would describe as an expert in the field. This is certainly something that I grappled with and only properly understood upon having kids of my own and being part of the early years as a parent. It is a complex area and is made more complex by the fact that not all states do it in same way, in terms of who offers it. It is not always funded in the same way either. With that in mind, some level of knowledge of the existing system is important.

Of course, in terms of the really important consultation work that needs to happen with the sector and stakeholders, we want someone who knows how to have that kind of engagement, someone who is respected by those sectors, someone who is good at making sure all the stakeholders get an appropriate say on how they feel this should be done, supporting them through that and also providing a very clear road map to exactly how we meet our commitment for commencement in 2026. I know that is a broad answer but, as I said, I am pretty confident we will have an announcement about who the person will be soon.

The process will be the same as it has been for the appointment of royal commissioners in the past. I believe that there is a recommendation from cabinet to the Governor and then, assuming the Governor signs off, things can get underway. Support will be provided through the Attorney-General's Department along with some support, of course, from the education department. I think I will leave my answer there.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: In relation to the support the minister just identified, he said there was support from the Attorney-General's Department and support from the education department. Are you talking about in-kind support, staff support, in addition to this to \$2 million expenditure that is outlined on page 27?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: In terms of the Attorney-General's Department, that is the \$2 million that we have set out. In terms of the Department for Education's contribution, as you said, that will be largely in kind. Ms Bray points out that there will be a fair bit of work, in terms of making sure that the right documentation that the royal commissioner needs to consider is current and accurate once it is passed over for the commissioner to do their work.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I understand that it is not unusual for a royal commission that wants to seek information from government departments that there is a certain cost for those departments in ensuring that all the provision of information is accurate. Certainly, the education department's interactions with the Disability Royal Commission nationally in recent years have taken up significant staff resources. Is there any budget within the education department's budget for what the anticipated cost to the education department of supporting this royal commission is going to be, in addition to the \$2 million in the budget papers?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I might pass over to Professor Westwell to speak, but there have not been any discussions around that with me. My understanding is that the cost will be absorbed by the department, but I will let Professor Westwell talk a bit more about what that support might look like and whether there is any cost.

Prof. WESTWELL: We have had those discussions internally about what that might look like, and we are confident that we can absorb it within the current resources of the department. We want to really see the detail and the direction that the royal commission takes, but we think we can absorb that within the department.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: In relation to the \$2 million identified on page 27, how much of that is budgeted to go towards the salary or the pay required by the royal commissioner?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I would say from the outset that \$2 million is the figure that we have set aside. Operating within that envelope, it will depend potentially on who the candidate is, but we do not envisage that the pressures from what the payment to the royal commissioner would need to be will put any upwards pressure on the \$2 million envelope.

My own experience—not pleasant ones in dealing with royal commissions in the past—is that the rates the royal commissioner has set out in some cases for what their fee would be, have in some cases been different depending on whether the person has been a former judge in the past or something like that. I am not necessarily anticipating that is going to be the case here, but that is a conversation we will need to have with the successful candidate. We do not expect that will push us outside our envelope.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Will that figure be made public in due course?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I will take that on notice. My honest answer to you, member for Morialta, is that I do not know what the procedure for that is, but I shall seek an answer.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: In relation to the \$2 million, is that new money to the education department—new money to the budget—or is that from within education department existing resources repurposed for this election commitment?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I understand that it is hard-fought new money—hard fought and won, in this case.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: You win some and you lose some.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: You sure do.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: In relation to the royal commission, when will the government release the terms of reference for the royal commission?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: We have set out what we referred to as a draft terms of reference, which we put out before the state election and have issued and spoken about since. We do not anticipate much variation in that, but I think the prudent thing for us to do, once the royal commissioner has been in place and has been signed off or approved by the Governor, would be to sit down with that person and talk to them about whether or not they are comfortable and whether or not they think there is anything we need to add. I do not anticipate any great change to the terms of reference, but once we have had that conversation with whoever the royal commissioner is, we will obviously make the final terms of reference public.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Given, some would argue, the narrow scope of the initial terms of reference for a royal commission—and I am talking about in relation to delivering on an outcome already identified by the Labor opposition, as it was, to have universal three-year-old pre-

school and how to do it, and I think the Labor Party subsequently made a couple of additions to what the royal commission would examine—and given the minister has indicated the royal commissioner's advice will also be sought as to whether they would like to amend the scope, will the minister consider consulting with relevant stakeholders in the early childhood space—pre-school and long day care service providers, Early Childhood Australia and other stakeholders—in relation to any suggestions they might have for gaining maximum benefit from this royal commission?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: That is an excellent question. One of the very first things that we grappled with in opposition when we were formulating this policy was that it would most likely be of at least some concern to the long day care and childcare sectors. What we envisage is that once it is up and running, three year olds will be doing preschool at least for some period during the week. Obviously, our goal is to have the same amount available to three year olds as we do to four year olds, but that would be taking them away, in some instances, from child care.

We engaged Kerry Mahoney from the Australian Childcare Alliance and talked through what our intention was in terms of making sure they are engaged in part of the royal commission. I think we came to a good understanding that our intention here is not to try to in some way sabotage their business model or anything like that. They, too, acknowledge, which is very decent of them, that this is a global shift towards preschool for three year olds and that it is coming, one way or the other.

We gave them a commitment to make sure that they would be part of the royal commission and have opportunities to express ways, if they so feel, that they can be part of the delivery of it, if that was in some way necessary and they were comfortable with that. Now that I am the minister, I reaffirm my commitment to work with all those parties, acknowledging the very important services they offer and that the move to three-year-old preschool should not be seen as a reflection of the amazing work they do.

I am astounded by people who work in child care. I think it is such a difficult job, and we acknowledge the important role that they do. We will do everything we can to make sure they are included in the royal commission.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: At the moment, as I understand it, the three year olds who are able to access preschool in South Australian settings are children under guardianship and Aboriginal children, the two cohorts that have, for some time, been able to access preschool. I should say that when I talk about three year olds I am talking about the cohort of children who are able to access two years of preschool. I think we can use three and four as shortcuts for that.

Those three year olds are pretty much doing the same program as the four year olds. There is not a differentiated set of development and learning as a whole for the three year olds as opposed to the four year olds. Is the government doing any work to prepare the sort of program that would be of most benefit to the three-year-old children themselves if it was a universal program, or is it the expectation they would undertake the same program as the four year olds?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I think I will start with some comments and hand over to Ms Bray to add some more. I would like to acknowledge the work that has already been done in terms of trying to provide preschool wherever possible for three year olds who are in those vulnerable cohorts, understanding the importance of doing that and the really positive effect it can have on their lives and their families lives as well. Of course, we need to remember that it is not just about the child, it is about the family.

Often, it is people or staff at our schools, our preschools or our childcare centres who get to see first if there is some kind of dysfunction in the family or if something is going wrong and can hopefully then trigger other interventions and support to wrap around that family. I acknowledge the great work that is being done in terms of trying to get three year olds in those vulnerable cohorts into some kind of three-year-old preschool.

I met recently with Goodstart Early Learning to properly introduce myself now that I am the minister and talk to them about their priorities for the sector. They passed on to me the work that they are doing as well in terms of trying to provide, even in a childcare setting, more preschool-like services for young people. I acknowledge the work that they are doing. I might allow Ms Bray to add some comments to my answer.

Ms BRAY: Historically, obviously we have the Early Learning Strategy, which was a quality strategic work plan that outlined the department on delivering a range of different reform in the preschool and child development space. Part of that particular piece of reform is looking at how we look at the early learning space and how we look at tangible things in the preschool and the pedagogy for preschool children. It is space—really, nationally—that is being looked into, the play-based three-year-old preschool program and how we can ensure it does differ from having two years of three-year-old and four-year-old preschool.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Thank you; that is helpful. Given that work is already underway at a national level and that there is an understanding about three-year-olds, many of whom are already in the system and have been for years, are there any professional development programs the government is planning to put in place to support staff so that they can best support the unique needs and abilities of three-year-olds, especially given there are so many more set to join their four-year-old friends in the coming years if the government's policy is enacted?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I might make some preliminary remarks in regard to the National Children's Education and Care Workforce Strategy, which, I dare say, might be something the member for Morialta is already aware of. All governments have committed to that strategy, which recognises the critical importance of the early childhood education and care sector as well as the dedication and resilience of its workforce. I know I said in my opening remarks in the earlier session that we have all witnessed, throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the incredible work they have done.

The 10-year strategy, from 2022 to 2031, recognises the complexity of the workforce challenges in the sector and that all stakeholders collectively have a role to play in supporting the recruitment, retention, sustainability and quality of the workforce. High-quality children's education and care set the foundations for lifelong learning and development. A vital factor in the delivery of high-quality education and care is, of course, an ongoing, experienced and well-qualified workforce. I might pass over to Ms Bray to provide a bit more detail about that strategy and how it addresses the question asked by the member for Morialta.

Ms BRAY: There are a number of things outlined in that workforce strategy, including the professional standing of the industry as well as how we attract people to the particular sector and retain them. There is a significant part there around leadership and, fundamental to your question, around training and looking at vocational and educational opportunities for those trainers.

I will say, as well, that the department has heavily invested in and supported training around our early childhood workers. Only a couple of weeks ago, I attended a forum where we had all the early childhood directors in the room in regard to their requirements around training and requirements around their ongoing support.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: In relation to the commitment to deliver three-year-old preschool for all children in South Australia, has there been any advice or any briefings to the minister on what the recurrent cost of delivering that commitment is once there is universal access for three-year-old preschool?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I thank the member for his question. Obviously it is a very complex area, which is the reason we announced a royal commission in the first place to provide advice on how we deliver on our commitment—which we are completely committed to and have not resiled from one bit. I also point out that we can talk costs, but all the data and the position we come from here are that this is a really significant investment in our young people.

I acknowledge that there is work that was done in the past, to which I think the member for Morialta has referred previously, which I think occurred under the former Labor government, possibly when Jay Weatherill was still Premier, which looked at the model. I guess that is when the public dialogue really started to kick off around a move to this. I acknowledge that that is there, but it is now somewhat out of date and presumes a model as well.

What we are looking at to get advice on from the royal commission is exactly the mode of delivery, and there are potentially different ways of doing that. We will all meet the commitment that we made before the election, and we will await the advice of the royal commission on that. No doubt there will be further information to come as the royal commission does it work and we finally get recommendations and then can move into the delivery phase.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Is the minister able to identify whether the commitment to deliver universal access for three-year-old preschool is going to allow 15 hours per week of access for every child in South Australia to that preschool program once the commitment is fully delivered?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I think it is safe to say that that is our ambition, 15 hours. As is the case with four-year-old preschool, it will depend on what the take-up of the 15 hours is. That could be different because we are talking about a younger cohort. Although a year might not sound like much at that age, a year is quite a bit.

As I am sure the member is aware, we have a longstanding agreement—and when I say 'longstanding', thankfully it is now a longer agreement—for universal access to 15 hours of preschool for four year olds. I acknowledge it is good that that is now not the year-to-year proposition that it has been in the past. Of course, we want to work with the new federal government, which I think share our ambitions in terms of three-year-old preschool, on what an agreement might look like for three-year-old preschool as well. Some conversations have already started.

Once I get the chance to meet with the new ministers for education and early childhood, which I hope will happen soon, I will be putting on their agendas fairly and squarely that we will be seeking federal government support as well, which will come as no surprise to anyone. I guess there will be more to come from those negotiations with the federal government in terms of what an agreement might look like, but I would be pretty confident in saying that other jurisdictions in Australia that are moving this way, which include Victoria, ACT and potentially New South Wales, would be looking for a similar kind of co-investment from the federal government in this important area.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: To clarify, the government's ambition is for it to be 15 hours, but it could be a different number. It could be 12 hours or some other number. As to the cost or the investment when the program is fully delivered, the state government will be seeking some federal contribution towards that, noting that for four year olds, for example, I think the state covers 12 hours and the federal government covers a further three hours. If I have that right, can I ask one other question in relation to it?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I think my answer was that our ambition is 15, as is the case with four-year-old preschool. I think what I said is that we will not be sure in terms of the uptake from three year olds in terms of families opting to utilise it.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: So the offering you are expecting to be 15 hours, but you are not certain whether all of them will use all 15 hours?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: That is correct.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: That is the ambition of the government and the cost you will be seeking to identify through the royal commission and gain some money from the commonwealth in delivering it.

In terms of what the government's expectation of what the delivery of their commitment will look like, I acknowledge that not all preschool in South Australia is delivered by public preschools and kindergartens. There are a number of accredited preschool type programs in long day care services. I think Goodstart offers a number, and there may be other services that provide a preschool-type program—non-government schools, for example.

Is it the government's expectation that the delivery of universal access for three-year-old preschool will at least take place in an accredited approved preschool-type program, or is there flexibility that the minister seeks for the royal commission to come up with an alternative proposal?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I thank the member for the question. I guess my answer is that that is a fantastic example of the kind of complexity in the area that led to our deciding on a royal commission to offer a road map. That is a very good example of the complexity in terms of how preschool is currently offered in South Australia compared with how it is offered, for instance, in Victoria, which is in some cases quite different.

Instead of racing ahead and saying, 'We're doing it and we're not going to seek the advice of a royal commission on this big change. We're going to blindly do it without that advice,' we have been firm in saying that we will seek the expert advice of a royal commission first to make sure that

all those kinds of things like the member for Morialta correctly identified then—and that is possibly just the tip of the iceberg—are considered properly to make sure that the model we put in place, which will meet our election commitment, is the right model.

S.E. ANDREWS: Minister, I refer you to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 182, targets 2022-23, the second to last dot point. Can the minister update the committee about the pilot programs being established to increase the number of South Australian children receiving an early childhood development check?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I thank the member for Gibson for the excellent question. Child development screening is a critical tool to check that children's development stays on track. As I said in answer to an earlier question, 90 per cent of a child's brain development occurs before they are five, which essentially means there is no hope for any of us in this room: we are largely stuck with being the people we are.

It is incredible to think that so much of it occurs by the age of five, and it highlights why it is so important that we get those early years right and why investment in those early years is an investment and should be viewed as such and not as a cost. Child development checks allow us to pick up developmental delays early before they are entrenched. We know how hard it is to ameliorate those once they are entrenched, especially issues around literacy and numeracy.

As I said earlier, my father was a high school English and Australian History teacher, and he would always say that for those kids he got into the classroom in year 7 who had not had the success in their early years in terms of becoming literate that others had, it was a very hard task to arrest that, much harder than it is in the earlier years, when those issues are identified by things like these childhood development checks.

The government is expanding the reach of child development checks across South Australia through a range of pilots with government and non-government partners. Negotiations are currently being finalised for the first two pilots, which are expected to commence in July of this year. These pilots will be with Playgroup South Australia and with the Caring Futures Institute at Flinders University in collaboration with Goodstart Early Learning.

I am advised that we expect that the pilot with the Caring Futures Institute will offer health and development checks to over 2,000 children at 20 Goodstart Early Learning sites. I mentioned earlier that I had met with Goodstart Early Learning recently and we discussed three-year-old preschool, and they were also very keen to talk to me about how they are doing these pilots with over 2,000 children at their sites. I gave them an undertaking or expressed an interest in going along and perhaps seeing how they do it, given its importance.

The pilot will include selected sites in regional areas, including Mount Gambier and Whyalla. Nurse practitioners and registered nurses will conduct the checks on site. Checks will only be conducted with parent consent, of course, and parents will be informed of the outcome and referred to services where that is necessary. Allied health support will be offered to families at Flinders University or through local services.

While details are yet to be finalised, we expect that the pilot with Playgroup SA will test a different service model. Screenings will be undertaken by a trained professional using a validated screening tool but will not be performed by a registered nurse and they will not include a health check. All families attending playgroups that are registered with Playgroup SA will be offered the chance to have the child developmental check.

Families will be present during the check. I think we can all understand why that would be necessary, as it has been with our vaccinations. Families will be offered pathways for assistance if that is required. Families will be encouraged to see their healthcare provider if any health concerns are identified in these checks.

Beyond these two pilots, we are looking at additional pilots and other ways to increase the reach of child developmental checks. Over the coming 12 months, different service models will be trialled and piloted in different locations. All the pilots will be independently evaluated to understand if they increase the reach of child developmental screening. The remaining pilots will be rolled out

progressively over the next two years. Longer term, the pilots will inform our development of a systemwide approach to expanding the reach of child development checks.

The total budget for the program in 2022-23 is \$8.3 million. This is going to increase to \$16.7 million from 2024-25. This will include surveys of parents to find out if the models work for them. I am sure we can all understand why that is important and why it is always important that we get parent engagement in things like this. Learnings from all pilots will inform systemwide rollout in the coming years. I thank the member for her interest in this very important area, and I look forward to being able to share more information about how these pilots go in the coming months.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I thank the minister for that answer. We were talking earlier about hard-fought-for new money for the department, and I am pleased to hear that it is still there.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I acknowledge the former minister's role in that too.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: It was one of my better days. In relation to the early childhood strategy the minister was just talking about, a couple of the points in that strategy—and they are on page 23 if the minister needs to check later—were in relation to looking at potential policy settings for an additional year of preschool for children in both remote and rural programs. Particularly, the department was looking at preschools where the numbers of four year olds were not potentially at the mark where they needed to be under the department's funding scheme. Can I ask whether there was some opportunity to include three year olds in those programs in remote centres?

Secondly, on the explicit suggestion of reviewing policy settings for an additional year of preschool for developmentally delayed children, the department was looking at these two areas for potential inclusion of three year olds in preschool programs, in addition to the guardianship and Aboriginal children, last year. Are those investigations still underway?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I thank the member for the question. I will give some preliminary remarks and then I might hand over to Ms Atkinson to provide a bit more detail. I understand the initial investment in the Early Learning Strategy to which the member for Morialta refers is \$50.1 million over the first four years, and that includes more than \$35 million allocated to expand the child development screening system.

Through the Early Learning Strategy, we have partnered with a range of key non-government organisations to raise the profile and the focus of the early years. These include the ongoing work with Playgroup SA, including allocation of \$200,000 for Playgroup SA in June of last year, and Raising Literacy Australia, including a \$500,000 grant funding allocated in June of last year also.

Ongoing local government collaboration, including a successful council grant allocation round of \$200,000, was completed in April of this year. I am advised that implementation of the strategy is underway, with 100 per cent of the current actions on track or completed, despite the interruptions that we all know took place due to COVID-19. I might pass over to Ms Atkinson now to talk, if she can, with a bit more specificity about your question.

Ms ATKINSON: With regard to the additional year for developmentally delayed children, that is now being incorporated into the implementation of midyear intakes for preschool. The midyear intake allows parents to choose at what period of time their children are most ready to start preschool but also it allows the ability, if they started in the mid year, to potentially do additional two terms of preschool if considered needed before they commence school.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Can I clarify that. So, rather than talking about three and four year olds in that circumstance, we would then be talking about four and five year olds in preschool getting their two years?

Ms ATKINSON: That is right, the additional year after the current universal entitlement as opposed to before.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Has any further policy work been done on whether the opportunity for three year olds in remote communities may be able to benefit from preschool sooner than the delivery of the 2026 election commitment?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I acknowledge the importance of doing that and that time is of the essence for all kids of that age but particularly in the vulnerable cohorts, as so many of our young people are who live on the lands.

Ms ATKINSON: I can advise that we are continuing to work with individual communities, whether it is capacity within their existing preschool programs, particularly in regional areas where there might not be other early learning opportunities, and to incorporate them into the existing four-year-old programs within the staffing entitlement while a broader program of work is being developed to look at what sort of entitlement could be rolled out more broadly, noting, of course, the commitment to deliver three-year-old preschool from 2026 impacts that.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: In the house and on the radio the minister and I have had some conversations about when exactly the minister's election commitment of universal three-year-old preschool commencing in 2026 will arrive. I do not want to traverse all those discussions; that is why I have left it to the last four minutes of this session to raise this issue. Can I ask the minister: in what year will all South Australian three-year-old children have the entitlement to access preschool-type programs?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Without repeating what I have said and sounding overly obstructionist, which I do not want to be, I would say that is why we have funded a royal commission.

As I think a number of us here have said in our answers to other questions broadly on this topic in this session, there is more than one mode of delivery here that will still achieve our election commitment. Rather than from opposition blindly plucking one of those pathways and then be stuck with it, we did what I still firmly believe was the prudent and sensible thing to do and that was to have a royal commission to provide us with expert advice on which pathway to take, noting that in no way should my answer be taken to be walking away or stepping back from what we committed.

It is completely in line with what we said in our very first press conference about this announcement on, I think, 21 October or 23 October last year. As I said, we will have a royal commission and I hope that the process can begin soon. We are confident of at the very least meeting the time frames that we set out publicly before the state election, if not compressing them and meeting them earlier to make sure that we meet the time line that we set ourselves of 2026.

There are a host of things that the royal commission is going to need to consider. They involve but not exhaustively things like existing capacity in the system, where more capacity would need to be provided and workforce considerations. The member for Badcoe very late last night—and I referred earlier how she is always in touch with me about this issue in this matter—sent me an email. I was up reading briefs for estimates, but it was an ad she had seen from the Victorian government advertising workforce opportunities for their preschool, which I think slipped across the border on Channel 10 probably because that station gets a little more content from there.

They are making a concerted effort, I should say, to try to attract staff from outside their jurisdiction, including from wonderful South Australia, to meet the time lines they have set themselves. As the minister, I do not want to be in a position where we are losing existing staff. All those things need to be considered, including making sure that we have the workforce.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Irrespective of the method of delivery—and I understand that there are different options available—and irrespective of whether it is 15 hours or 12 hours, whether it is in a public preschool or a long day care centre with a preschool-type program, irrespective of all of those things, one of the things that I think is well understood is that whether it is a four year old in long day care or a four year old in preschool, or a three year old in long day care or a three year old in preschool, the long day care service is funded by parents and/or the commonwealth with subsidies and the preschool service is predominantly funded by the state government and is very cost-effective therefore for parents. If a parent is interested in when their three year old is able to attract this improved financial benefit, is that going to be available to all parents in 2026 or is it not?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: A good question and my answer ultimately will be, again, a consideration of the royal commission. I acknowledge that you have touched on a really important point which I probably have not laboured as I should have in my answers, which is that there are not just considerations around the wellbeing of the children and the families but also considerations

around what will be a pretty significant cost-of-living saving, given the way that we fund and deliver four-year-old preschool here and the costs to families for long day care or any other form of care.

Again, it is one of the key tenets of what the royal commission will need to look at, but I acknowledge that families will be interested in accessing three-year-old preschool for reasons over and above the wellbeing of their child, and that includes cost savings that they will reap from that.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: And that cost is not met in the budget. Consider that a comment, if you like.

The CHAIR: The allotted time having expired, I declare the examination of early childhood development complete. I thank the minister, committee members, staff and advisers for their time. We will go to Administered Items.

Membership:

Mr Odenwalder substituted for S.E. Andrews.

Departmental Advisers:

Prof. M. Westwell, Chief Executive, Department for Education.

Mr C. Bernardi, Chief Financial Officer, Department for Education.

Dr P. Smith, Executive Director, Strategic Policy and External Relations, Department for Education.

Mr T. Anastasiou, Assistant Director, Budget Management, Department for Education.

Mr G. Mackie, Chief Executive, History Trust of South Australia.

Ms M. Bensley, Interim Chief Executive, SACE Board of South Australia.

The CHAIR: We will now go to administered items. Minister, you have new advisers?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: There are some changes, yes. Again, I am joined by Professor Martin Westwell, the chief executive, and also Dr Peta Smith, who is the Executive Director, Strategic Policy and External Relations. In the nosebleed section down the back we have Greg Mackie, the Chief Executive of the History Trust, and Michaela Bensley, who is the Interim Chief Executive of the SACE Board. I do not intend on making any opening statements and am happy to take questions.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: If in doubt, we will go to Volume 1 of Budget Paper 4, page 178, where the list of administered items is. There will be some specific ones. Can I clarify: does the Minister for Education retain responsibility for the History Trust, Carclew, Windmill Theatre and Patch Theatre, or are some of those likely to become the responsibility of the Minister for the Arts?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I thank the member for the question and I am happily retaining those as Minister for Education.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Outstanding.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Yes, agreed.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: On page 206, there appears to be some dramatic movement in the relation to the arts entities under grants and intragovernment transfers. Can the minister explain that fairly substantial change in the funding between the 2021-22 estimated results and the 2022-23 budget? If you go to the bottom half of the page where arts entities are listed, they are listed twice and there are some fairly dramatic changes both between the 2021-22 budget and the estimated result and this year's budget in relation to those?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I thank the member for the question. That's—

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Maybe I can refine the question. Are any of the four listed arts entities expected to be making contributions towards the whole-of-government savings task? I understand that the education department has been ring-fenced from that savings task by and large. Are these arts entities included in that ring fencing or are they going to have a contribution to make towards those savings?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Could I cheekily add that that is one of the hard-fought victories to which we have both referred. I invite Mr Bernadi to answer this. This question has Mr Bernadi written all over it.

Mr BERNARDI: The settings that have been in place under the former government are still in existence.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Excellent. Shall we move to the SACE Board at this point?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I invite Ms Bensley to come up for this one.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I thank Ms Bensley for the briefing I had last week. It was appreciated, and it will hopefully mean that we can get through these in a pacier fashion than might otherwise have been the case. Can I ask the minister when the government will appoint a chair and a permanent chief executive to the SACE Board?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: The short answer for me—and I might pass over to Ms Bensley for a bit more detail—is about six weeks, I am told. That is the time line that has been set for me as minister to finalise those appointments. I will ask Ms Bensley to give you a little bit more detail of why that is the time frame.

Ms BENSLEY: The expressions of interest for the vacancy of the board will go into the various publications next weekend. I think they close in about the third week of July, and then a list is provided to the minister's office for conversations and then selection around that vacancy, and then a chair of the board needs to be selected as well. With regard to the recruitment of the chief executive, the board has recently met and stood up a committee that relates to the selection and recruitment, and that process is in train, focusing on the selection of a recruitment agency to support that appointment.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: When is it anticipated that that process will conclude?

Ms BENSLEY: Between four and six months, I would imagine, depending on the candidate.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: We thank you for your service in the interim, and potentially further—I would not want to comment. Can the minister update the house about the redevelopment of the Personal Learning Plan and the Research Project?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I thank the member for the question. The SACE Board Strategic Plan 2020-2023 is obviously a very important part of the division that the board has set for the organisation. The 2020-23 strategic plan, developed under the direction of the board, has a three-year time frame that incorporates the SACE stage 2 review recommendations. It is focused on the achievement of three major priorities: bold leader, connected qualification and thriving learner that underpin the SACE Board's purpose of shaping education so that students can thrive.

The main areas that will lead educational change and student transformation to thrive include developing a learner profile as a way of representing a wider range of a student's learning and development. This is certainly something that I am very keen to support and hear more about because such a profile would include a student's subject grades and a representation of their capabilities also outside the strict parameters of their grades.

I might add an aside here that something I saw in my schooling years was probably a failure by the education system broadly to acknowledge skills that clever young people had that were outside the traditional scope of what was deemed to be intelligence or clever. That ultimately resulted in their being disengaged from school because they felt that they were stupid, or not up to it, or of no value in the classroom, or did not have a future in our education system, which was both an incorrect assessment of their skills and a poor outcome for them.

Embedding a capabilities model into the SACE will support teachers to help students develop their capabilities, capture evidence of their development against a standard quality assured teacher's judgement and then certify and represent their capabilities. Another area is renewing the stage 2 Research Project with clearly defined options, the first of which is an entrepreneurial project. A pilot program is underway now, with a second larger pilot scheduled for 2023.

A further area is renewing the Personal Learning Plan, which I think was another component of the member's question. A pilot program is also underway for that now, with a second larger pilot scheduled for 2023 in line with the entrepreneurial project for stage 2 of the Research Project. A final area is renewing the VET Recognition Register, working closely with the Training and Skills Commission and Industry Skills Councils, to support the Flexible Industry Pathways, which we spoke about earlier, outlined in the VET for Schools Students policy.

I might leave my comments there because I think this is one where Ms Bensley might like to make some additional comments.

Ms BENSLEY: Importantly, I think that both the revitalised Personal Learning Plan and the Research Project are being developed with teachers in a pilot mode. We are testing, we are learning and then we are adapting with both of those. In terms of draft names and how we are describing them, with the personal learning plan we are looking at 'exploring identity in futures' and with the revitalised Research Project we are looking at 'activating identity in futures'. The names of those are purposeful, in terms of being not only the bookends of the SACE but articulation through those subjects.

With the Personal Learning Plan, the shift is from primarily a focus on a career, which is, 'What do you want to be?' to 'Who do you want to be?' It is a focus more around the sorts of skills and abilities you need to be able to progress into the world. With the Research Project, primarily the focus in terms of the shift is from fairly heavily scaffolded evidence of learning, with a really tight focus on research methodologies, to a greater focus on student agency and their own ownership in choosing their own strategy to adapt and learn so that they can plan and create their own learning in an area they are really excited by.

The revitalised Research Project will allow that contextual ability for students to have a vocational pathway as well as a focus on the entrepreneurial perspectives. In the pilot phases, students are being resulted in these subjects, with it being recognised towards SACE completion as well as entry and inclusion in the ATAR. We are going for a much broader pilot in 2023.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Is the SACE Board working with universities on alternative mechanisms for school leavers to gain university entry as an alternative to the ATAR?

Ms BENSLEY: We most definitely are. It is our intention that developing the whole person is an intentional outcome of senior secondary education. Of course, it is important to know skills and knowledge, but it is equally important to be able to demonstrate how you might be self-motivated in your learning, whether you are principled in terms of the way you might go about your scientific studies and how you work and communicate with others.

This demand to have a better understanding around what the whole person brings is really demanded by employers, industry and universities going forward. We are in the beginning phases of trying to understand data models and working with the three universities around what it might look like to create a whole picture of a student so they can better match pathways with the sort of student they are after. That would be a combination of the assessment of their capabilities and their grades, in terms of subject disciplines, and that would be evidenced in what we are calling the learner profile.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: What would that mechanism or the learner profile mean for a student who wanted to access a teaching degree, given the government's commitment to work with universities to install a floor ATAR of 70 for those degrees?

Ms BENSLEY: Certainly, we are expecting the learner profile to sit alongside the ATAR. Access to universities and those pathways in the traditional method, using the ATAR and a range of other methods, is still available. This is more a focus on those students who would not otherwise be able to get into university from their ATAR to demonstrate that they have a range of capabilities that are as valued in terms of their pathways going forward.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: For that student in question, if their ATAR is 69 but their learner profile suggests in every other aspect they are doing great, they will still be underneath the floor of the ATAR because the ATAR will still be there.

Ms BENSLEY: This is absolutely still a work in progress in how it sits alongside. We are still in the very preliminary stages of working with teachers around how they make fair and valid assessments around capabilities, and then how that gets evidenced within that data model is certainly a work in progress.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I might add, if I could, member for Morialta, that the minister in cabinet who has carriage of the commitment around the floor ATAR of 70 is the Minister for Higher Education. I am happy to answer whatever questions I can, but I—

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Happily, I have some time with the Deputy Premier tomorrow afternoon, so we can pursue that then. Is the government planning on providing any further funding to the SACE Board for furthering the work on the learner profile in the coming years?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: To be perfectly frank with you, member for Morialta, it is not something that I have considered yet, but I guess you could take my earlier remarks about how interested I am in this, and I know you are too, which is a great thing, and have a bit of bipartisanship on the need for us to head in this direction. I would certainly be open to that, but it will be subject to the usual budget processes I guess.

I think there is enormous value in this. I also think it really aligns with other things this government is doing in a range of areas. I have also had a whisper in my ear that they have not yet asked for anything, so you have now given them that idea, so thanks very much.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: You are welcome. I might move to other matters, if the minister wants some assistance, in relation to chaplaincy funding. The agreement with the commonwealth regarding chaplaincy funding comes to a close at the end of this year. Has the minister had any discussions with the new commonwealth minister about the renewal of that agreement, and is it expected that South Australia will receive the same amount as previously from the commonwealth to deliver this service? Will it be adjusted for inflation, for example?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Thank you, member for Morialta, for this question. Can I say from the outset that the first I was aware of the announcement was when I read it in the newspaper, I think it was. I am not saying I do not welcome it, but I have not been involved in the federal government's thinking or planning on this. I am seeking more information on that myself. It is one of the things I have on my agenda to speak about to the new federal education minister, Jason Clare.

I am hoping—maybe somewhat naively, I do not know—that it might result in additional money into our state for counselling, whether that is the kind of counselling offered by groups such as SMG, which I have a lot of respect for, I might add. They do some very impressive work in public schools in my seat and around the area. I will be honest and say that I probably approached faith-based counselling in our public education system with a degree of scepticism until I sat down with principals of public primary schools in my area, who may have ordinarily come at such an issue from the same angle as I did, who were glowing about the work they did and the resources it provides them.

My hope is that the announcement from the federal government, whilst I do not have any more detail on it, might result in a situation where we can provide more of this type of really important counselling, keeping in mind that our \$50 million for mental health and wellbeing will do some of the heavy lifting in this area as well, and that it might result in our having more counselling offered across our system, whether that is from chaplains through groups like the school's ministry group or Centrecare or Uniting Country SA or Your Dream Incorporated, or whether it is the secular counselling that the federal minister, Jason Clare, has been talking about.

I will certainly be seeking information around their intentions in terms of what South Australia's share will be. I hope it results in an outcome where more kids have access to the counselling they need.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Thank you for that. Obviously, we are very eager for the commonwealth to provide South Australia with as many resources as possible. Notwithstanding that,

the last time this agreement was done the funding was maintained but the cost of delivering the services had increased and the demand for the services had increased. So the former government put in place, for the first time I understand, some state government funding to supplement that federal government funding towards chaplaincy.

Is that funding still in the education department's budget of what we expect to spend next year? Is the government committed to continue to use state government funds, if needed, to ensure that no existing schools that receive chaplaincy support miss out?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I might have a little chat to Mr Bernardi and Professor Westwell, but I am not going to pre-empt the negotiations I have with the federal government because I hope South Australia is a winner in terms of that money that is being put on the table. I do not have an answer for that yet.

If your question was in terms of the \$1.05 million put in place by the previous government in terms of additional funding for the period from 2020 to 2022, we are committed to that commitment, if I can put it that way; we are not making any changes there. We will work really closely with the new federal government as soon as we can to get a more accurate idea of what their funding commitment might mean for us. After that, we will have to analyse what unmet need exists.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: But you are maintaining an open mind should the federal component not be sufficient to meet current need, including the current state component?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Keeping in mind that we have also committed the \$50 million for 100 extra wellbeing support officers. If schools come to me as the minister and say there is a gap in terms of what we all know is an incredibly important counselling service, then I will of course consider that.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I move to non-government school programs. There is a 50 per cent increase, \$500,000 extra per year, that the minister committed to, the former government committed to, in relation to funding in the Catholic schools sector for buses. The former government committed to a 50 per cent increase for Catholic and independent schools, but the budget appears to deliver a 50 per cent increase for only the Catholic school sector. Is that an oversight, is that something that is going to be addressed, or is it the intention of the government to shift from the traditional funding of the Catholic sector and the independent sector equally in such provision?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I thank the member for the question. I might give a little bit of perspective on how we came to that point. Before the election, both of us, you as minister and me as shadow minister, were approached by independent schools and the Catholic sector about what support they were seeking from whoever the next state government was going to be. My recollection is that the Catholic sector strongly put forward a request for more money towards the school bus issue which, as we both know, has been a problem for many years.

My recollection is that AISSA, the association, did not raise that but, having said that, we have had negotiations since. I have met with Ms Grantskalns and Mr McGoran to discuss what Ms Grantskalns explained was possibly a miscommunication from both of us in terms of what the independent schools were also looking for. It was not our intention to treat them in an inequitable fashion or anything like that.

The amounts we gave were the same, in terms of \$2 million across the forward estimates for the Catholic sector for buses and the same towards the two independent special schools—one of which, I think, is in the member for Badcoe's seat, which we have been to, and the other is Suneden Specialist School, which I am very keen to get to because the work they do there is quite remarkable.

We have had conversations recently with Ms Grantskalns that she had assumed, because of how funding had been dealt with in the past, that the commitment around buses would be for both. I have given my undertaking to Ms Grantskalns and Mr McGoran, in both writing and verbally, that I intend to work with AISSA to see what we can do to try to meet their needs in terms of buses. We have started those negotiations and work, and I am hopeful that we can land something there.

I want to say that our intention was not to try to move away from the way we have dealt with and supported each of those non-government sectors. We felt we were just responding to the specific

requests that were put to us in opposition, but we are confident we will find a way through this that will be agreeable to all parties.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I appreciate the minister's frankness there. I am certain the Catholic sector would welcome an extra \$500,000 to support their students with a disability as well. Is the government committed to continuing the non-government school no interest loans program and, if so, when is the next grant funding round going to be open?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: The short answer is yes. I would have liked it if the former minister had always told me when he was coming to my seat, but I understand that is not how these things work. I mean that completely in jest. I do appreciate the letters the former minister used to send about successful projects under the loan scheme and grants scheme that were given to schools in the area, because you would not ordinarily always find out about that.

I know how well received they have been by those schools, and there are at least two I think in my seat that were beneficiaries. I am thinking of King's Baptist and maybe St Francis Xavier Regional Catholic College. We are committed to continuing it. Dr Smith tells me that round 3 is due to open in June 2022—obviously, that is now—and closes in August 2022.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Timely.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Good timing and good question. Round 4 is scheduled to open in November 2022. For all the members of parliament on both sides, speak to your schools.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I am sure there are hundreds and hundreds of school finance officers watching this broadcast right now.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Of course.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: How much funding remains available in the SAFA fund under which these loans have been established?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I am advised that loan amounts between \$500,000 and \$10 million per school are available, and I do not think we propose any changes to that. SAFA has advised that there has been \$112.03 million approved under the scheme to date, with \$207.97 million remaining in the scheme, excluding three applications from round 2 worth a combined total of almost \$22 million that are pending approval.

The total loan amount approved for round 1 was \$65.35 million. Round 2 opened for applications on 16 September 2021 and closed on 7 November 2021. There were 11 applications, requesting just shy of \$91 million. Of these, eight applications totalling \$46.68 million were approved.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: On page 206, there is a line for multicultural grants. I am making an assumption that this is funding that goes towards the Association of Community Language Schools. If that be the case, I note that in DPC in multicultural affairs there is a further \$1 million a year that is to go to those community language schools.

Firstly, there appears to be a very small reduction from last year to this year in that multicultural grants loan, from \$2.19 million to \$2.14 million. Is that as a result of an efficiency somewhere or a program ending? Secondly, is the Association of Community Language Schools going to have separate funding arrangements with multicultural affairs and DPC and Education or is it expected that that funding will actually transfer from multicultural affairs to education so that the community language schools can just have one partner in this arrangement?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: In relation to your last question, I am told it will be one partner. I will give a tiny bit of background before I hand over to Dr Smith, who I think is a bit more expert on this than I am. In 2022-23, \$2.4 million is available to support the community language school program. The program supports more than 1,350 teachers and volunteers in 95 accredited schools. They deliver 47 languages to around 9,000 students.

In the 2021 school year, 22 community language schools offered a SACE program, with 165 students participating. I will pass over to Dr Smith to give a bit more information about how we plan on that program.

Dr SMITH: We will obviously be working with the community language association to design an appropriate application of that funding, and we will be preparing advice to the minister in short order. The election commitment is currently being transferred to the Minister for Education, so we are waiting for that to occur before we commence detailed consultation.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Thank you. I will take one more question, which is on the History Trust.

The CHAIR: Sorry, you will take one more question or you will ask one more question?

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I will ask one. I will take up your offer to ask one more question.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Member for Morialta, can I add something very quickly to my last answer because I understand that questions were asked of the Minister for Multicultural Affairs in her estimates session. I think the answer that the minister gave, in terms of your latter question in relation to who was responsible for the grants, is that work is still being done on that. I am happy to take it on notice and come back to you rather than give you an incorrect answer. I am happy to take another question.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: In relation to the History Trust, what is the time line on the History Trust needing to move out of accommodation and where will it be going? I understand that the Torrens Parade Ground has a new tenant, effectively, that has a very hard deadline.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I thank the member for the question. I have had some very positive interaction so far with the History Trust, one at which the member joined me, which I have to say was a lot of fun. That cannot always be said about the events that we go to. I thank the chief executive, who is in the gallery somewhere, for making sure that the libations, as he referred to them, were flowing on the evening.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: All donated, I understand.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Indeed. Yes, there is a time line for the History Trust to move from the Torrens Parade Ground because I think it is Legacy, if I recall, that is moving in there under plans to co-locate services around veterans to that very appropriate location. We are in the process of finding alternative accommodation that I hope will meet the needs of the History Trust in terms of what they offer and also in terms of the nature of their work and where they have been located previously.

The CHAIR: I am sure we can find some buildings in Gawler.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I am sure the Chair would like that.

The CHAIR: The historic town of Gawler.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I believe the time line for the History Trust to be out of the Torrens Parade Ground is the end of October this year, so we are working feverishly at the moment to accommodate that. There is still money committed in the budget—I do not believe any change has been made to that—to accommodate the shift. It will be a bit of a challenge; I admit that. We have had lots of negotiations and discussions already about what potentially appropriate accommodation could be. As soon as I have more information, we will, I am sure, be able to say something publicly about that.

The CHAIR: The time allocated for examination of this line is now complete and I declare the line closed. I thank the minister, the committee members and advisers for their information. I would also like to commend all the committee members for the very civil way in which the examination has been undertaken so far.

Sitting suspended from 13:02 to 14:00.

Membership:

Mr Patterson substituted for Mrs Hurn.

Mrs Pearce substituted for Ms Hutchesson.

Ms Wortley substituted for Ms Stinson.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr D. Coltman, Chief Executive, TAFE SA.

Ms M. Welby, Chief Financial Officer, TAFE SA.

Ms K. Hoey, Director, Strategic Policy, Governance and Advice, TAFE SA.

The Hon. A. PICCOLO: Welcome to Estimates Committee A. The portfolio now under consideration is TAFE SA. The minister appearing is the Minister for Education, Training and Skills. The estimate of payments is for the Department for Education and Administered Items for the Department for Education, and the Department for Innovation and Skills and Administered Items for the Department for Innovation and Skills.

I declare the proposed payments remain open for examination. I call on the minister to make a brief statement, if he wishes, and introduce his advisers. I will then call on the lead speaker for the opposition to make a statement, if he wishes, or go into questions. Minister, the floor is yours.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Thank you. Can I introduce on my left the Chief Executive of TAFE SA, Mr David Coltman, and on my right, the Chief Financial Officer of TAFE, Michaela Welby. Behind me is Kimberley Hoey, Director of Strategic Policy, Governance and Advice. We have some other representatives from TAFE SA here as well. If I need them to add some extra detail to any answers I give, I will introduce them at the time. I do not intend to make an opening statement. I am happy to take questions.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I will move straight to questions. I take you to Budget Paper 4, Volume 4, page 79, investing expenditure summary and the program contemporary digital student learning systems and support services. My recollection is that one of the functions of this program is that it will assist to improve the AV and digital capabilities at various campuses to enable blended learning and remote learning of certain courses. Are we able to have an understanding of how many regional campuses have benefited from upgrades that ensure they have adequate AV and digital equipment to enable remote delivery of courses, and which campuses are they?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I thank the member for his question. Yes, his summary is pretty accurate. The digital and/or blended digital delivery methods enable TAFE SA to increase access and choice to vocational education and training in our state without students having to attend a campus for all their study. Obviously, in a state the size of ours, where we have a small population, relatively speaking, compared with the rest of the country, and large distances, it is obviously an impost upon TAFE to maintain all its campuses in those areas.

That comes at a great cost, and it can make it difficult in terms of course provision, so there are benefits in blended delivery. From July 2021 to May 2022, 73 per cent of all TAFE SA qualifications contained digital and/or blended digital delivery components. If I could quickly summarise, perhaps, and then I might hand over to either Mr Coltman or Ms Welby to add a bit more detail.

The benefits are access, which I think I have outlined already, and contemporary learning methods. More specifically, the use of digital or blended delivery methods also allows TAFE students to gain competence in a range of digital skills required to learn and participate in the contemporary workplace. With regard to responsive delivery, TAFE receives real-time feedback from students studying in digital and/or blended digital delivery programs. Those survey results at the completion of a unit of study conducted in that way can be collated and summarised to inform educators on any delivery method changes that are required, based on that survey data.

With respect to student engagement, TAFE SA educators can monitor student engagement levels in digital and/or blended digital delivery methods by monitoring digital footprints through the

learning materials provided. That has become, it is fair to say, throughout the pandemic incredibly important, given that we have had schools in some cases switch to online delivery of courses.

I know that I have conversations with principals and educators who say that it has been difficult in some cases to track the genuine engagement of students who may or may not actually be there at the other end of the virtual platform, or who may be off doing other things they might find more entertaining at the time. I think that financial liability speaks for itself.

In terms of specific course areas, qualifications for the following areas contain blended digital delivery components: cookery; hospitality and tourism; business marketing; justice and information technology; hair and beauty; primary industries; community services; health and lifestyle; arts and fashion; and traditional trade areas, such as automotive engineering, fabrication and mechanical and building and construction as well.

I might pass over to either Mr Coltman or Ms Welby to give a little more information specifically to your question around where these upgrades to enable greater delivery have been provided.

Mr COLTMAN: The shadow minister will recall that TAFE SA secured \$2,880,000 across the 2020-21 financial year for the digital campus regional hubs from the Australian government for the Revitalising TAFE Campuses Across Australia funding initiative.

The project invests in infrastructure to enable the uptake of the digitally enabled delivery to which the minister was referring by the provision of fit-for-purpose teaching and learning spaces, which we refer to as student hubs. Upgrades under this initiative are underway, and those are occurring at the Mount Gambier, Berri and Whyalla campuses.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I might add a bit of extra information at the end just to say that, whilst I acknowledge in the comments I have made and the comments Mr Coltman has made about the place that blended delivery has and the benefits it can provide, I think it is fair to say that certainly I am a believer in face-to-face education where we can achieve it.

I know that has been tested in the last few years by things like the pandemic, but certainly in terms of how TAFE provides its services, its course delivery moving forward, I am very keen to have that face-to-face learning where we can. I think there are the obvious benefits that everyone here probably knows in terms of delivering it in that way and having a relationship between the lecturer, or whoever it might be delivering the course, and the students undertaking the course. We are keen to prioritise that where we can, but we acknowledge that there is a place, particularly in a state as large as ours, to have a blended delivery model where it is appropriate.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I thank the minister and I thank the chief executive. Which South Australian TAFE campuses do not have one of these hub-type facilities, effectively? Which TAFE campuses do not have the relevant infrastructure to enable blended delivery or the access to courses that might or might not otherwise be available in those locations?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I am happy to pass that to either of my advisers if they have information on that.

Ms WELBY: Part of the bolder future project was also to run a pilot for 10 further campuses to set up the digital hubs. We are very close to rolling out three of those. Once those three and then a further seven are settled in, we would then look to expand the pilot further.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Can the minister identify, or through him his officers, which three are imminent in the delivery of that? Which of the other seven campuses will be delivered in this part of the pilot and by when?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: We will get that information for you. We will take that on notice, if we may, and come back to you.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: With respect to the investing expenditure summary, apart from the new projects at Mount Barker and Victor Harbor, the remainder of the projects are listed as aggregates really: the annual capital program of \$10 million, the revitalising TAFE SA campuses at \$1½ million and the project we referred to before at \$6.9 million.

This might be an answer you would like to take on notice, and I would be happy for you to do that if that was suitable. Is it possible to have the individual projects and capital projects provided as an itemised list and how much is being spent on each of them, rather than this aggregate figure?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I thank the member for the question. I suspect that is something we might need to take on notice, and we will do so.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I appreciate it. Given that we were talking about TAFE campuses, is it possible to identify how many students are currently engaged in TAFE courses at each campus?

Mr COLTMAN: That information is available, but we would have to take that on notice to provide you with an extensive list of the students enrolled by campus.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Is the minister happy to do so?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I am.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Does the government have any plans to close any existing TAFE campuses and, if not, will the minister give a commitment that the government will not close any TAFE campuses over the next four years?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I have no plans to close any TAFE campuses. I am not aware of any plans that have been put to me by the agency either. I think I am happy to provide my commitment that we will not be closing any TAFE campuses during the term of this Malinauskas Labor government.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: For the record, is the minister happy to get us a list of the TAFE campuses that have closed over the last 10 years and which years they closed in?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Yes, I will take that on notice and come back to you with it. I can provide a shorter list over the last four years, if you wish?

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: It is a much shorter list than the full 10-year list. We have a couple of members I think who are also interested in questions, so this might be a good time to go to one of them.

The Hon. D.R. CREGAN: If I can take the minister and committee to Budget Paper 4, Volume 4, at page 79, within the TAFE SA subsection, the heading Investing Expenditure Summary, under the table heading New Projects, in the line Mount Barker and Victor Harbor upgrades. What is the scope of the works with respect to the Mount Barker TAFE site?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I thank the member for the important question and again for his advocacy on this topic and his community. If I might start with answering his question in respect of the scope of works planned at Mount Barker TAFE, I can advise the following. Those works will deliver a refurbished, modernised training cafe kitchen and service area to enhance teaching facilities in the tourism and hospitality programs that are run there.

I note, having visited quite a few TAFE campuses already in my time as the minister, that up-to-date facilities in those particular areas are particularly important to make sure that they are up to spec with what students who might graduate use when they move into the workplace. The purchase of additional training equipment to enhance delivery of automotive programs well and truly falls into that category as well, given the pace of change in terms of what is happening with our vehicle fleet across Australia.

Last week, or it may have been the week before, with the Deputy Premier I visited the MTA, which had an expo on. They are particularly focused on what they are doing to make sure the students who come through their training facility have the skills to be able to work on electric vehicles in the future, not just the kind of internal combustion engines that have traditionally been the source of those courses.

The renovation of the existing skills training lab to increase training capacity in nursing, allied health, and other community services programs, I suspect that might be of particular interest to the member for Kavel, given that we are trying to employ extra staff in areas like that. In order to meet those targets that this government has set itself, we will need to make sure that we are attracting

people into the courses that will provide the future workforce. Additionally, the project will transform the student learning experience through the creation of the student hub flexible learning space at the refurbishment of the dual-purpose function area, which can be utilised by students and for hospitality service training.

In respect of the courses that are offered at Mount Barker TAFE, I can advise that the Mount Barker TAFE SA campus offers a broad suite of courses. They include foundation skills; hospitality, as I have mentioned; business services; mining; automotive, as I have mentioned; nursing; community services; and children's services. Currently, 17 courses are being delivered in addition to 10 short courses.

TAFE SA is planning to increase educational delivery at Mount Barker in the areas of aged care and disability, and certainly everyone here knows the significant skills shortages we face in those areas. When we ventured down to the Limestone Coast for our first country cabinet, one of the things that was passed on to me and many other members of cabinet was the pretty serious skill shortages that exist in that area, and I know in other regional areas of South Australia as well, in terms of finding the workforce needed to care for people in aged care and disability. I am glad to see that we are planning to increase that. I am sure that will service the local community well going into the future. This increase will see the addition of two qualifications and two skill sets being offered to the Mount Barker community.

The project provides infrastructure improvements within areas of industry need in the Adelaide Hills. That is always very important. In my answers to questions from the member for Morialta in the first session today around technical colleges, I spoke about our desire to make sure that the course offerings at those five technical colleges are tailored to meet not just the broad skill shortages and needs of our state but also the specific and unique ones that might occur in some of those areas, particularly areas like the Limestone Coast and Port Augusta; the same applies to TAFE.

I am pleased that they are turning their mind to make sure that it meets local need in the Adelaide Hills in terms of infrastructure improvements to which we are committed. I am looking forward to visiting the Mount Barker TAFE campus soon. I hope the member will happily have me along and join me, and I look forward to being able to update members in this place as we go. These are important works that are occurring, and I thank the member for his question.

The Hon. D.R. CREGAN: Thank you, minister.

The CHAIR: The member for Finnis has a supplementary I understand.

Mr BASHAM: On the same line, there is an item in relation to the Victor Harbor campus. What is the intent of that campus?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I thank the member for the question. Let me just see if I have a prepared answer on that one as well, given that very important question. I might need to take the question from the member for Finnis on notice. Unless those opposite have any detail of the project that is occurring, I will get that for the member. I would also be very happy to come and see that TAFE facility and would be happy if the local member would join me.

Mr BELL: My question is to the minister, and I refer to Budget Paper 5, page 105. Can the minister please advise the committee how the government's investment in the Mount Gambier TAFE campus to deliver trade courses, in particular in the forest industry, will benefit not only my region but the state?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I thank the member for Mount Gambier for this question. As I said in an earlier answer I gave, the first country cabinet of this new government was held in the Limestone Coast area. Before that, I was pleased to make my first regional trip as minister to the South-East, including Kingston, and then to Mount Gambier, where I had the opportunity to sit and talk to the member for Mount Gambier at the wonderful Metro Bakery and to run through with him the commitments we had made and seek advice on how we best deliver them to make sure that we get the best outcomes we possibly can for people who live in the Limestone Coast area.

One really important commitment is a \$5 million upgrade to the Mount Gambier TAFE SA campus. I have talked already this morning about our announcement at that country cabinet, that we

will be co-locating the technical college on that site. There is available land there, and I think it makes sense for us to have what I hope will become known as an educational precinct for the area there with UniSA, TAFE and the technical college. In terms of the upgrade to TAFE specifically, we know how important the forestry industry is for the state.

I grew up just over the border and spent a lot of my childhood playing football across the border against Mount Gambier and Millicent sides. They were always fairly long trips through the forests, so I knew from a young age how expansive they were. It probably was not until I came to live on the other side of the border that I understood how important they are to the economy of the state.

Since becoming the shadow minister for skills and training before the state election, I have come to understand the issues around skills and training for that industry to make sure that they have the pipeline of workers they need to continue the work and to grow. I think the Premier has been pretty clear in his comments that he acknowledges that the area is an incredible economic driver for the state but that it has been underinvested in by successive governments. We do not intend to make those mistakes.

On the first visit to Mount Gambier, when I sat down with the member, I also went to McDonnell & Sons and OneFortyOne timber mills to talk to them about what they needed. There was some fantastic advocacy, particularly from OneFortyOne. I think it was Danielle who ended up joining us at the TAFE site when we made the announcement of where the technical college would be. She was a dream, in terms of who a minister hopes to meet when they are seeking advice on things like this.

She was incredibly clear around where the skills gaps were and also, pleasingly, spoke to us about the opportunities that might be there to leverage the equipment that these big timber mills have, like OneFortyOne and McDonnell & Sons, particularly in terms of saw technician or saw doctoring, which is one of the skills shortages we have committed to addressing in South Australia. We want to make sure that that course is available in the state.

The reason the name of that course has colloquially changed from saw doctoring to saw technician is that it is not like it used to be. It is no longer sharpening teeth on an old-fashioned blade. It is highly technical work, dealing with some very advanced machinery and that machinery, of course, costs an enormous amount of money.

Both timber mills spoke about the opportunity that might be there where, instead of asking our training providers to somehow find large amounts of money to have that equipment for people to train on, we might be able to work with local industry to use the world-class technology they already have to provide that training.

We spoke with them about what they want to see, in terms of our investment into TAFE SA and how it might help to address the skills shortages they have. There are 7½ thousand businesses operating in the Limestone Coast region, with agriculture, forestry and fishing comprising 40 per cent of those, which is an incredible figure. As the new minister, I am committed to ensuring there is a dedicated skills response for that community.

I was pleased to visit the TAFE SA campus, as I said, with the member for Mount Gambier and the Premier to announce what we are doing there. We were asked questions of course and spoke happily about where that \$5 million investment would be made. We want to make sure there are the state-of-the-art facilities needed at that campus to be able to offer the courses that are needed by local industry. We want to make sure that we have a view to what other skills or roles are going to be needed that might not be online yet that we need to start preparing ourselves for.

I think that this investment in TAFE will really aid the ability to deliver higher level vocational education and training qualifications in Mount Gambier and the surrounding areas and align the delivery to university degrees. I think that co-locating it on the site of UniSA and the technical college makes sense, in terms of making sure the three are operating together, as well as delivering short courses to address immediate workforce needs because we know that need is there right now. This is not just planning for the future; we have existing skill shortages.

The government has also committed \$2 million over three years to develop a forest products domestic manufacturing and infrastructure master plan, including a focus on future skills needs. I thank the member for the question and for his constructive involvement in helping us to ensure that we get the best bang for our buck in delivering this for the Limestone Coast area.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: If I can take you to Budget Paper 5, page 104, the return of individual support courses, can the minister advise how many students will be trained and gain a Certificate III in Individual Support at TAFE SA over the next four years as a result of this budget allocation?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I thank the member for the question. I am pleased to have the opportunity to talk about the government decision to reinstate these courses. I can say, hand on heart, that I had a lot of feedback when I was shadow minister about the need for TAFE to continue its offering in metropolitan campuses of courses such as Individual Support (Disability), Individual Support (Ageing), Early Childhood Education and Care, and Community Services.

A number of community childcare centres, in particular, raised with me that they had long used TAFE graduates as their graduates of choice for those courses. The day after winning government, we made the formal announcement that the courses would be back and open for enrolment.

We were joined at the CBD TAFE campus by representatives of Rembrandt Living and Helping Hand, which are two very large aged-care providers in South Australia. Both providers spoke in glowing terms about the fact these courses were coming back and how crucial it was to them in terms of finding the really high-quality workforce that they needed to be able to care for the many people who live in Rembrandt Living and Helping Hand facilities in South Australia.

The qualifications to be reinstated will support an expected 640 additional students for metropolitan delivery in the 2022-23 financial year across Certificate II in Community Services, Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care, Certificate III in Community Services, Certificate III in Individual Support (Ageing), and Certificate III in Individual Support (Disability), and the Diploma of Community Services as well.

I think I might have a bit more information in terms of the member's question specifically about what we think that 640 figure that I have given will grow to. There will be an expected 640 new commencements each year. If these courses were offered, it would have resulted in approximately 1,900 new students in 2021 and TAFE SA would have reported an increase of 455 students, rather than a decrease of 1,445 students.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Does the minister have any advice as to how many students would have been trained over the same period for the same funding level by non-government providers, were this investment not to be made?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I do not have that on me. I am not even sure if we can access that.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Can the minister advise how many students will be employed as trainees and how many will be trained institutionally?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I might pass over to Mr Coltman on that one, member for Morialta.

Mr COLTMAN: The number of trainees as opposed to the number of institutionally based deliveries will depend on the availability of work placements determined by the GTOs with whom TAFE SA works as well as the availability of students to undertake that form of study. That is a demand-driven number that I could not predict.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: What does TAFE SA's modelling suggest that the likely number will be?

Mr COLTMAN: I do not have that available.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Would you be willing to take it on notice, minister?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I am told we will try.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I go back to the number of 640 students being trained in the range of courses the minister identified—640 commencements each year, as I understand. Is there a specific number within that 640 that is for the individual support cert III, as opposed to some of the others that were mentioned?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I am told we will need to take that question on notice.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: In relation to the question that was already taken on notice in terms of TAFE's modelling on what is expected for trainees and how many are to be trained institutionally, can I ask—and, potentially, it will be in the same answer—whether there is a target for the number of paid trainees that TAFE is seeking to engage through that process?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: We shall take that on notice as well.

Mr BELL: I refer you to Budget Paper 4, Volume 4, page 79, investing expenditure. Minister, is there a time frame on the Mount Gambier TAFE upgrade? Related to that, do you have any thought or initial comments on the management and perhaps governance structure of the technical college and the TAFE being on the same site?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I thank the member for the question. I will seek some advice on the time frame. I am told the funding is set out in the budget for the 2023-24 year, so we would expect that that upgrade would begin in 2023 (next year), which is good news. In terms of the governance model with the technical college, we are deep in considering that now would be my answer.

I will happily take some advice about how that model might best work from the member for Mount Gambier and local education institutions like UniSA and of course TAFE and also from some of the private providers there who provide some of that training that is so vital to industries like forestry. However, although they are separate projects they are co-located, and I want them to be able to work together. The worst outcome here is that they operate completely in isolation of each other, which I do not want.

I would be happy to come back to the member once we have done a bit more work on how that governance model could look, and seek his advice on that. It is something we would want to seek advice about from the local community and representatives from UniSA as well to make sure they agree we have got it right. It is a very good point.

Ms WORTLEY: Remaining on Budget Paper 4, Volume 4, page 81, the minister has already spoken about regional TAFE and how they support the in-demand sectors there. Can the minister now outline how the reinstatement of courses in metropolitan campuses is supporting skills growth in in-demand sectors?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I thank the member for her question and note she is a strong advocate of TAFE, including in her own electorate. Yes, I have spoken a little bit already in this hearing about our decision, and I have answered some questions from the member for Morialta about that.

In January 2021, TAFE SA exited from the delivery of a number of courses it previously offered in metropolitan campuses, including aged care, disability care and early childhood education and care. These industries were on the frontline of the COVID pandemic in many cases, and we have some pretty acute skills shortages in those areas. The workforce that is trained in these courses is also the workforce that cares for some of the most vulnerable people in our society.

I know that we have heard some horrific stories over many years about the treatment some people in those kinds of settings have experienced. This government is committed to doing what we can to make sure that the workforce we are training to care for people who are elderly or for people with disability, or whatever other complexities and challenges they might have, receive high-quality care.

The very clear feedback we received in opposition—and I mentioned this a little earlier—from employers in the private sector, in areas like community child care as well, was that they very much wanted to see TAFE still operating in these areas in metropolitan campuses because they had been producing graduates that those businesses had favoured for many years, as they saw them as being of high quality. I guess that was the genesis of our election commitment, to bring them back,

and I am very pleased that we were able to act on that as one of the first things we did, probably the first election commitment we were able to deliver in my important portfolios of training and skills.

As I said before, when we made that announcement we were joined by representatives from Helping Hand and Rembrandt Living, two very large organisations. Helping Hand operates in the member for King's electorate, just over from my own electorate, and we have both been through and had a look at that facility. It is incredible. The levels of support they offer there range from independent living all the way up to pretty complex care of an incredibly high standard.

Both the member for King and I have received a lot of feedback from people we represent in our seats who have spoken so highly of how their loved ones have been cared for at places like Helping Hand. Of course, we know that a lot of that comes down to the quality of the staff caring for those people. It was affirming to have representatives from those two organisations join with us and welcome the return of these courses. I think that speaks volumes.

I mentioned earlier, in terms of the issues that came up at community cabinet in the Limestone Coast, that the demand for skilled workers in the aged-care and disability care sectors has increased considerably, and the return of these courses will in some way alleviate those skills shortages and make sure that we are providing not just the necessary FTEs in terms of numbers but also that they are of a really high quality.

The investment provides greater access to engaging learning spaces, technology, lecturers and high-quality learning opportunities across metropolitan Adelaide. The reinvestment in industry-specific skill sets will contribute to the economic future of South Australia by training the skilled workforce that employers and industry need, and it is the workforce they have told us they want. South Australians will be better prepared for a growth in demand across care sectors, and reinstating funding for courses to be delivered at metro TAFE SA campuses is a key step along the way to achieving this. I note there is still more to do.

Some of the meetings I had in the member for Mount Gambier's electorate during country cabinet were quite sobering about the pressures they are under. Of course, it has been heightened by the global pandemic, borders being shut and some of that workforce that has previously come from outside our jurisdiction not being available. That is the challenge that was presented to us by that. Of course, there is opportunity there as well, though, to see that we can do whatever is in our power to train a local workforce, including people locally in Mount Gambier, to care for vulnerable people in their own community. I thank the member for her interest in this topic and the question.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: On the same line, are the TAFE students we are talking about in terms of individual support extra students overall, or will they be students who would otherwise have been going to non-government providers like Auctus or the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation? Indeed, have those other stakeholders expressed concern about their funding and business model as a result of this decision?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I will pass to either Mr Coltman or Ms Welby to provide a bit more here, but we expect that this will grow the number of people undertaking these courses over and above the numbers who were undertaking them during the period when it was not offered by metropolitan TAFE SA. In terms of concern about those in the private sector who offer these courses—and I acknowledge there are many providers who do a fantastic job and provide really high-quality graduates as well—given the incredible demand that is there for a lot of these courses, we are confident that this will simply enable the whole pie to be grown. I am hoping that it will not come at the expense of those private providers to which we have both referred. I will hand over to Mr Coltman.

Mr COLTMAN: The demand for the delivery of these courses over the last year has not subsided in any way. We continue to see students wishing to study with TAFE SA, whilst the private providers continue to deliver as well. We believe that there is an unmet training need that this can support.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I will add to that that if we are to talk about framing this in terms of contestability, then contestability would be to allow TAFE to operate these courses and offer these courses in both metropolitan and country regions. To prevent them from doing it in areas where they

already had pretty strong existing demand I do not think really is in the spirit of contestability. All the information I have read since becoming minister, about where our most acute skills shortages exist, suggests that in the areas of these courses that we have brought back there are really big skills shortages and demand.

I would like to think and I am pretty confident that will mean that we are not going to see a reduction but that it will grow the overall pie, and of course it provides choice for people about where they want to conduct their course.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Is the \$12.7 million new money to the budget entirely, does it include the federal government's JobTrainer subsidy, or does it come from elsewhere within government?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: We understand it is new money.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: On page 79, is the government going to proceed with the upgrade of the Hopgood Theatre and how does the government propose to manage the theatre going forward, through TAFE SA leasing to Country Arts SA or proceeding with the transfer to Onkaparinga council?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I thank the member for this very important question. I might provide a little context first about how we came to be at this point. I was pleased to recently get down to the Hopgood Theatre—I had not seen inside it before—and meet some of the very passionate local people who have worked, performed and put on productions in the Hopgood Theatre and to speak with local members of parliament and concerned community members about what our plans for the future of the theatre are.

It is an important community resource. It is quite remarkable. In fact, I have been through that shopping centre—I think it is Colonnades—many times and not really understood what was inside the Hopgood Theatre. It really is an incredible asset in an area that is readily accessible to people who live in the south and who might go to those shops.

In 2018-19, the theatre hosted 193 shows with attendance of 52,212 people. In 2019-20, there were 128 shows with 34,000 people, noting that the theatre was closed between March 2020 and June 2020 due to the COVID pandemic, which obviously affected those numbers. The average number of shows offered at the Hopgood Theatre over the past seven years is 156. TAFE SA recognises the role the Hopgood Theatre plays in supporting a vibrant southern suburbs community. TAFE SA is working with both the City of Onkaparinga and Country Arts SA to deliver the best outcome for the Hopgood Theatre and the communities of the City of Onkaparinga.

That brings me to the election commitment this government made to make sure that we save the Hopgood Theatre for the community long term. We are busily working on how we deliver that commitment right now, but I am very confident that we will deliver it in line with the commitment we made in a way that will please and reassure all those stakeholders involved in this incredible public asset. Our commitment remains.

I think the other part to the member's question was around Country Arts SA and TAFE SA's involvement. I might ask Mr Colman to provide a bit of information around where that is going.

Mr COLTMAN: Thank you, minister. TAFE SA and Country Arts SA have been in extensive discussions around the Hopgood Theatre, including its ongoing administration. We continue to work for a solution that will enable the Hopgood Theatre to be saved for that integral part of community infrastructure and to remain a viable option going forward. It has been an exciting partnership and we are looking forward to delivering the outcome as promised

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I might add to that, member for Morialta, just to summarise the points made by both me and Mr Colton, that we will ensure that the Hopgood Theatre is maintained for the community into the future and that the upgrade that is planned will continue. The money is there in this budget, so that is secure, which is good.

Of course, I want to make sure that we do the right thing by Country Arts SA as well. We are having discussions on those issues right now. I am pretty confident that we are going to have more to say about this very soon, and I think that will be of a positive nature for all stakeholders concerned.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Is the TAFE SA Regional Plan still proposed to be finalised? It has said on the website for some time now that TAFE SA is reviewing and analysing feedback received during the consultation period and looks forward to utilising the feedback received to review and refine the draft regional plan and, 'Thank you for being part of our progress.' When will that regional plan be finalised or can the minister confirm whether the regional plan is actually going to be delivered by the new government?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I will pass over to Mr Colton to provide an answer on this one.

Mr COLTMAN: Thank you, minister. It is fair to say that since the initial consultation on the regional plan occurred COVID-19 has continued to present challenges for our regional communities, our regional students and our regional industries that we serve. Work on delivering an increasing range of courses available in regional communities has continued over that period. We have taken advice from regional communities about how they would like to contribute to both a future operation and ensuring the needs of their communities are met.

In terms of the regional plan itself, with a new government and a new policy setting that we are looking forward to delivering upon, there may be some necessary changes. Since the consultation was undertaken, the chair of the board of TAFE and I have visited every regional campus to discuss with staff, stakeholders and local councils the direction that TAFE SA is heading and how our bolder future transformation program will deliver on that.

The CHAIR: The allotted time having expired, I declare the examination of the proposed payments for the Department for Education and Administered Items for the Department for Education complete in terms of TAFE.

Sitting suspended from 14:45 to 15:00.

Membership:

Mr Odenwalder substituted for Ms Wortley.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr A. Reid, Chief Executive, Department for Innovation and Skills.

Ms M. Richardson, Executive Director, Skills and Workforce Capability, Department for Innovation and Skills.

Ms P. Chau, Executive Director, Performance and Business Operations, Department for Innovation and Skills.

Mr C. Zielinski, Director, Skills Planning and Purchasing, Department for Innovation and Skills.

Mr C. Marwick, Director, Skills and Workforce Projects, Department for Innovation and Skills.

The ACTING CHAIR (Mr Odenwalder): We are continuing on with the Minister for Education, Training and Skills' portfolio areas of Skills and Workforce Development and Department for Innovation and Skills. I declare the proposed payments open for examination and call on the minister to make a statement if he wishes and introduce his advisers.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I will introduce, on my left, Adam Reid, the chief executive of the department. On my right is Madeline Richardson, the Executive Director, Skills and Workforce Capability. On Mr Reid's left is Phuong Chau, Executive Director, Performance and Business Operations. Behind me somewhere I think I have Chris Zielinski, Director, Skills Planning and Purchasing, and Callum Marwick, Director, Skills and Workforce Projects. I will make a very brief opening statement, if I may.

Changes in our economy mean that there is an increasing demand for employees with suitable qualifications. That has been a theme, I think, of the questioning and answers that have

taken place in this chamber today. If students do not have the opportunity to get those qualifications, they are seriously limiting their options for future careers. The South Australian government has been clear on its commitment to increasing and targeting training opportunities to meet skills shortages. That is why our first state budget includes additional funding to connect more South Australians with the right skills to participate in the workforce, secure jobs and contribute to a growing economy.

We are building five new technical colleges, bringing together the practical outcomes of trade schools with the new technologies that are now an integral part of modern workplaces. We are injecting more funding into adult community education, returning funding levels to where they were in 2018. We are also committed to alleviating skills shortages in sectors that are critical to our economy. We have reinstated classes in aged care and disability care, as well as childhood care and education, at metropolitan TAFE campuses. We are providing more support for industry training providers, such as the Master Builders Association and the Motor Trade Association, to help meet rising skills needs in their particular sectors.

With the National Partnership on the Skilling Australians Fund agreement coming to an end on 30 June 2022, we are providing an additional \$11.9 million to continue delivering skills outcomes to individuals, businesses and industries—we negotiated a new agreement with the Australian government. An additional \$6.7 million over two years will extend the existing JobTrainer Fund national partnership agreement with the Australian government until December 2023, increasing free or low-fee training places.

The budget also commits to transferring ownership of Tauondi college's land and buildings into Aboriginal hands, as we said we would do before the state election. This \$8 million commitment will ensure Tauondi is owned by Aboriginal people for Aboriginal people and will remain a permanent foundation in the community and firmly on Kurna land. The South Australian government will continue to support low-fee and subsidised training pathways in close partnership with all training providers to build and train the workforce that we need.

I want to thank the staff involved in the machinery of government transition to date. I know these things are often difficult and tedious work. I look forward to working together as the department for education, training and skills. The South Australian government is strongly committed to delivering on the commitments we took to the election, and we are moving quickly to meet our promises. These measures will work towards building a strong VET sector and equipping South Australians with the skills that industry needs now and into the future.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I will go straight to questions. For those following at home, we are now on Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, and I think most of the questions would fit comfortably within page 174. There are several hundred million dollars' worth of grants and subsidies, there are FTEs and there is the net cost of providing services.

Can I take us back to some discussions the minister and I were having earlier in the day in relation to individual support courses. Has the Department for Innovation consulted with or received representations from the broader training sector in South Australia, including key stakeholders that deliver the Certificate III in Individual Support, such as the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation and Optus? If so, have those organisations and stakeholders expressed concern to the Department for Innovation about the decision to provide some extra specific funding to TAFE, since the election, to deliver the Certificate III in Individual Support?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I thank the member for the question. I have just conferred with my colleagues and I think we are all on the same page, in that none of us have had any communication to that effect from any of those organisations.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I understand that the Premier, in particular—I am not sure if the minister has as well—has expressed concerns about quality in non-government providers of individual support and other courses that have been restored to TAFE. Is there any evidence that non-government providers such as the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation do not deliver the same quality as TAFE SA in these courses?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I am not suggesting that the member for Morialta is misrepresenting the position, but I have not heard the Premier say that in terms of my own comments. I think what I have been pretty consistently saying is that what we have heard from chiefly employers who employ

graduates of these courses is that they wanted that offering to be offered at metropolitan TAFE campuses.

That is what drove our decision to commit before the election to reinstate them and, as I have said a couple of times already today and I will not repeat it ad nauseam, we were joined by some very happy employers in Rembrandt Living and Helping Hand at the announcement when we confirmed the money would be in the budget who said they were very pleased to have those courses returned. It is an election commitment that we are delivering on, and the genesis of the election commitment was the feedback we had largely from those employers.

I think broadly speaking this is about growing the entire vocational education and training pie, as it were. It is about choice and making sure that part of that choice for people in South Australia is a strong public training provider as well. I certainly do not intend to set it up as a means of diminishing the role of the private sector. I would say again that, in terms of the courses that we reinstated, there are really big skills gaps.

If we are going to address those skills gaps, we are going to need TAFE to be part of the solution and, no doubt, those private providers to be a part of the solution as well, otherwise we just quite simply will not succeed in meeting those gaps.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Is the minister able to advise how many Certificate III in Individual Support commencements were combined with paid training contracts since the introduction of the Skilling SA program in 2018 with non-government training providers and how many in paid training contracts with TAFE SA over the same period?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I will need to take that question on notice.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Can the minister advise what the average hourly rate for training in the Certificate III in Individual Support per student is in the non-government sector and how much is TAFE SA's hourly rate on the same?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I might pass over to Madeline Richardson for an answer on that one.

Ms RICHARDSON: I do not have at hand the specifics on the hourly rate as it relates to the Certificate III in Individual Support, so I am happy to take that on notice.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: What federal funding, such as commencement or completion payments, is forgone if certificate III qualifications are completed institutionally rather than through paid training contracts?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I might give the chief executive, Adam Reid, an opportunity to have a swing at this one.

Mr REID: If the question relates to commonwealth revenue forgone, that would be under the national partnership agreement for the Skilling Australians Fund which concludes on 30 June. In terms of revenue forgone, that would be subject to future negotiations around a new national skills agreement. It may result in no further revenue forgone, depending on the circumstances of the new national skills agreement.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Can I ask directly on that one what the minister's expectation is in relation to coming to a landing on a new national skills agreement?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I am happy to answer that one. I have written already to the new Minister for Skills and Training in the commonwealth government, Mr Brendan O'Connor, and had a phone call with him. I stated in both the call and my letter that South Australia's priority is coming to a landing on a new skills agreement for a whole host of reasons, including making sure the sector has some certainty given we have been in negotiations that commenced in 2020.

A heads of agreement was signed by South Australia for skills reform on 23 July 2020, so we are almost exactly a month shy of two years in negotiation for a new national skills agreement, which is obviously an incredibly long time. In light of that, I took the opportunity to speak to the new minister and pass on verbally that the immediate priority for our state is a new agreement, and I sent a letter to the same effect to make sure. I hope to be able to meet with him soon.

The chief executive reminds me that we actually led a multijurisdictional letter to the minister, which we prepared and I signed but was signed by other jurisdictions as well, so that we could all collectively reiterate our shared priority to make sure that the first priority for Minister O'Connor would be getting us together and starting work on a new agreement.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: One of the significant points of discussion throughout the discussion here and in the TAFE section in relation to Certificate III in Individual Support has been about the difference between institutional training and a paid traineeship, noting obviously that, when a student is undertaking a traineeship, they are being paid for their efforts while they are on the worksite.

In institutional training, such as is offered by TAFE but could theoretically be offered by any provider, how many hours do students who are seeking to gain that certificate III through institutional training have to work in unpaid job placements? How many hours do they work in unpaid job placements compared with the fact that those on a traineeship are under a contract of training with an employer?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Not to be difficult, but I am told that would be a question for TAFE.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I appreciate the answer the chief executive gave earlier in relation to the federal agreement that runs out at the end of June. Are there any federal payments such as sign-on and completion payments to employers that are not necessarily dependent on the national agreement, or is it all wrapped up at the end of June with that agreement? The question is: are there federal payments to employers that will continue past the end of that agreement?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I might ask Madeline Richardson to provide some detail on that question, if I may.

Ms RICHARDSON: In relation to employer incentives, there are a range of commonwealth incentives that continue that were announced in the last commonwealth budget that do support employers taking on apprentices and trainees. There are also programs that will be linked to the \$11.9 million that was announced in the state government's budget that may also play a role in supporting employers as well.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Do we have any analysis of how much federal funding will go to South Australian employers who are offering traineeships in this area if there were, say, a hundred traineeships being offered?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: We will take it on notice and try to get you an answer on that. I am told we may not be able to do that because it is a commonwealth program, but we shall try.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I refer to Budget Paper 3, page 23. At the bottom of page 23, it is confirmed that 'Skills and training functions will transfer to the Department for Education from 1 July 2022.' I also direct you to Budget Paper 5, page 87, which identifies departmental efficiencies in the order of about \$70 million, and I have a series of questions relating to those two budget lines. Can the minister advise how many FTEs from the skills and training functions will transfer to the Department for Education from 1 July?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Approximately 130 will transfer on 1 July.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Is that the number post the application of the departmental efficiencies identified in Budget Paper 5, or does that machinery of government (MOG) change carry with it a further savings task?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I thank the member for the question, and maybe I could talk first of all a little more broadly about the savings target to which the member refers. Broadly speaking, the department's global savings target, if I can refer to it as that, is about \$85.2 million. The share for the training and skills component of the department is \$17.2 million.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Is that over four years?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: It is \$17.2 million over four years. That will travel with the training and skills portfolio and 130 approximate FTEs on 1 July. In terms of what area is responsible for meeting those efficiency targets, and as we have both commented before, education is ring-fenced

and will remain that way. I might ask the chief executive to make a few comments about what work he is doing to look at where they can be found, but they will be found from what will be the training and skills component of the department and once the machinery of government changes are complete.

Mr REID: As the minister highlighted, we have a significant savings task that was allocated to us in the budget. In relation to the \$17.2 million that transitions across to the Department for Education, it has been made clear, both pre election and by the Treasurer subsequently, that chief executives are tasked now with determining how those savings will be met. It will be the task of the chief executive of the Department for Education to determine how the \$17.2 million will be achieved. As the minister highlighted, that is to be found within the training and skills portfolio. Again, I am happy to hand back to the minister, but the announcements in the budget that relate to training and skills initiatives are significant, in the order of \$50 million of new initiatives into the training and skills investment.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Excellent segue, thank you, Mr Reid. That is right, so keeping some perspective on the \$17.2 million over four years figure, the government is strongly committed, obviously, to the areas we have spoken about on many occasions today and has fully offset these savings through a range of new skills initiatives announced in this budget, which amount to over \$50 million over the next four years, significantly superseding the savings target. I can talk about what makes up that \$50 million figure.

We have \$12.7 million to enable TAFE to return to delivering the courses we have discussed in some detail already: \$11.9 million to continue the state share of funding under the Skilling Australians Fund of the National Partnership Agreement while a new agreement with the commonwealth is finalised; \$8.8 million to fund courses where industry has identified skill shortages, such as bricklaying, saw doctoring, chefs and concreting; \$5 million to upgrade Mount Gambier TAFE SA campus, which we have already discussed today; \$4 million to restore funding cut by the former government in adult and community education (ACE).

That, I think, broadly speaking makes up the \$50 million that is going into the training and skills budget, and obviously grows that budget even when one takes into account the \$17.2 million over the forward estimates that we shall need to find in savings measures.

The CHAIR: Member for Morialta, is this a new budget line you are going to?

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: No, I have a few more in this budget line.

The CHAIR: Can you let me know when you shift so I can go to the other side?

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Yes, I have about, probably, five or six to go and then I am happy to do that.

The CHAIR: A few is not five or six. A few is one or two.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Maybe I will ask one or two and then we can shift, and then we will come back to the same budget line if need be. The minister or the chief executive, I am not sure who, just said that \$17.2 million was the saving assigned to this program and that when it moves to Education the 130 staff will come across and this program will still have \$17.2 million worth of savings to find. I believe that the minister said it will be ring-fenced around this program and the cuts will not spread to anywhere else in the education department; is that correct?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: It will be up to the training and skills part of what will be the Department for Education next line, training and skills, to find those \$17.2 million over four years. They will not, if I can put it this way, be permitted to leach out into other parts of the agency that have been ring-fenced, as you quite rightly point out.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Is the training and skills part of what is to be the education department after 1 July, presumably an executive directorate or whatever the body is within the department, going to be purely this group of 130 people moving over and this program, or is it being integrated within the existing VET and training offerings, the pathways offering within the education department?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Broadly speaking, that is probably a question for Professor Westwell as well, as he is going to be the chief executive of the overall agency and tasked with the job of how that all fits together.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I understand that answer, but we have been advised that Education will be quarantined from any of these cuts that are coming over from the Department for Innovation. The key question I am seeking to understand is: given that the Department for Education already has a substantial offering with substantial programs in this area, a number of which we discussed this morning, are they also part of the quarantine that this set of savings will not impact upon?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I understand your question. Helpfully, I have received some information via SMS from Professor Westwell, who is obviously still tuned in, which is excellent.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: One of the thousands.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Indeed—there are so many of them. I understand that they almost do not have the bandwidth to cope with it.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I understand that Julieann Riedstra is watching too.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I bet she is. Hello, Julieann, if you are there, from the member for Morialta and me. VET and pathways stay in Education, as in that part, so the savings targets will not cross over into that part of the whole department. They will remain in the part that is transferring from the Department for Innovation and Skills.

Mr ODENWALDER: I have a question for the minister. I refer the committee to Budget Paper 5, the Budget Measures Statement, page 87, in regard to Adult Community Education. Will the minister outline this measure for the committee and how it supports foundation skills and also people with barriers to access learning opportunities?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I thank the member for Elizabeth for his very important question and his interest in this issue. I note that in the seat he represents, and also in the seats the members for King and Playford represent, there are a number of community centres at which some excellent adult community education is provided. In fact, from memory, I think that one I visited with the now Minister for Human Services might be in what is now the seat of Playford.

I had a chance to sit down with people and talk to them about why low-cost, easily accessible adult community education was so important for them and to speak to the people providing it as well about the kind of clientele and customers, if I can put it that way, who come in and access it and why it is important that we keep that provision in our state strong. Building foundation skills is often the first step for many learners. It builds confidence to undertake further study or work, and certainly that is something, member for Elizabeth, I saw when I visited community centres where ACE is run.

It is not true to say that if you were to remove funding for ACE and remove these foundation skills courses those people would not be able to jump across into the next level of training, whether that is something that TAFE or private providers provide or university or anything like that. In many cases, these are people who might be, for instance, new arrivals. They might be older people who need some skills around digital literacy, people with language barriers or people who have been out of the workforce for a long period of time and are trying to get back into it and dealing with issues of not just confidence but understanding how things in the workplace may have changed.

This is really an integral and essential stepping stone for people like that to get them back into the workforce or to help them change career or to possibly help people who do not have enough hours to support their family. We know that underemployment is an enormous issue in our society and that is where ACE steps in.

I am very proud that the second election commitment we have managed to deliver in these portfolios is to reinstate the million dollars that was cut by the former government from ACE, keeping in mind that it is provided through not-for-profit community centres across South Australia and that enables it to be low cost. It also means that the settings feel comfortable for people who I think otherwise would be unlikely to seek training or support. It is a relaxed environment with people providing the training who understand the challenges those people face. They treat them accordingly

and make sure they are able to engage in it, stick at it, and then they also assist them into the workforce or a higher level of training once they have completed their adult community education.

We know now in our workplace that digital literacy is an absolutely essential skill. There are very few workplaces or professions where people do not need at least a modicum of digital literacy, and community educators work with students to build those skills. I think that probably those skills have become even more important than they were now that we have seen the effect of a global pandemic and the importance of being able to pivot to offer things in an online fashion or work from home.

Of course, people who did not have digital literacy skills, who needed to work from home and perhaps operate virtually, were in an invidious position because if they did not have those skills the same opportunities to work from home were not provided to them as they were to the rest of the workforce who might have been more comfortable with setting up a laptop and working on Zoom or Microsoft Teams. I can tell you that there are lots of people out there who quite simply do not have those skills or the know-how to operate them.

That is another reason why I think it is important that we reinstated and restored the \$1 million cut. That is just the beginning. As the Minister for Training and Skills, I am committed to growing access to ACE, especially in our regions where I think its value is even more pronounced. ACE providers will soon be able to access the increased funding opportunities for projects and partnerships that make a difference to South Australians. I will be very pleased to hopefully report to this place in the future about how those wonderful community education providers are utilising that \$1 million that this government is putting back in to the betterment of the South Australian public.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 167, noting the relative program net cost between the four programs within the Department for Innovation. I think we have \$4 million for small and family business, \$18 million for creative industries, \$31 million for industry innovation and science, and this program is \$351 million out of the total of \$400 million. I just want to go back to the answers we were hearing before about the departmental efficiencies.

The departmental efficiencies listed on page 87 of Budget Paper 5 are about \$70 million or so in operating expenses and \$13 million in investing. Despite the fact that seven-eighths of the department appears to be in this program, I want to clarify whether it is correct that only one-quarter of the efficiencies are to come from this program and the remaining \$60 million worth over four years is to come from the three much smaller programs. Am I understanding that correctly?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I can confirm that, yes, you are correct in relation to that component of what is now the program that is run by the Department for Innovation and Skills. The 17.2 relates to training and skills, which will come over to education, and the remainder of that figure to which you referred, which I think is 85.2, will stay with the lucky gentleman next to me.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I look forward to the estimates with the Deputy Premier and the Minister for Small Business tomorrow accordingly.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Just do not tell her I said that.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: If I can clarify that. In relation to the 130 staff coming over to the Department for Education, have negotiations between the department settled all the details regarding the budget and FTEs that will transfer to education at this stage, or is there still some negotiation taking place?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I understand those negotiations have now been settled and concluded.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Will these functions, once incorporated within the education department, noting the education department also has responsibility for TAFE SA, continue to provide a responsive, high-quality and contestable VET system to ensure that employers and students have a choice and that South Australia has a strong market of training providers?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Yes.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Can the minister advise if the funding MAA between TAFE SA and the Department for Innovation and Skills will continue once the MOG occurs to ensure that a necessary level of funding transparency endures?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I thank the member for the question. The answer I have is that negotiations on that point are still occurring, but there will be an agreement. I do not have the detail to be able to tell if it is a memorandum of administrative agreement or something else, but I might ask if Madeline could provide some more information.

Ms RICHARDSON: As part of an annual cycle, there are negotiations and discussions with TAFE to ensure that there is an agreement in place that supports government priorities, outcomes for students and funding as well.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: In relation to the \$17 million over four years that is the savings task applied to this program that will be moving to Education, is the minister or the department able to identify how much of that is out of operating in each of the years and how much of it is investing payments?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I understand it is all operating.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Are you in a position then to provide any more detail about how you are going to achieve those operating savings?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Not at this stage. That responsibility rests with the chief executive, and I think he is already turning his mind to how that might be done. I am not in a position to provide any more detail to you today.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I am sure he is looking forward to that task, and obviously the 130 staff have a challenging period ahead. The \$17.2 million over four years has been identified; is the minister able to break that down by financial year, how much in each of the relevant financial years is expected?

Mr REID: I can answer that question. In terms of the breakdown of the \$17.2 million over the four years, in 2022-23, it is \$4.1 million; in 2023-24, it is \$4.2 million; in 2024-25, it is \$4.4 million; and in 2025-26, it is \$4.5 million.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I note that the current program has about \$16.6 million in employee benefit expenses and \$358 million in grants and subsidies. Is the savings anticipated to be coming from efficiencies within employees amongst those 130 staff, and, if so, how many staff are expected to be separated as a result of these savings; or, alternatively, is the government proposing to reduce the grants and subsidies, which I assume are mostly for the provision of subsidised training?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: There are a few things that I might say in response to that. First of all, I am reminded that the Treasurer has said there is no expectation that savings are to be met by cuts in FTEs. That comes at the discretion of a chief executive. I know that in this case Professor Westwell has already turned his mind to that and will be doing everything he can to find those savings in an appropriate fashion.

More broadly than that, as we have already spoken about in this hearing, I have already written to the new federal member and made it clear that a new national skills agreement is a top priority for South Australia. I am hoping that the outcome of that might be increased federal investment in the skills and training system in South Australia, which of course would be greatly welcomed and would very much assist us in continuing to grow the system.

The chief executive reminds me that will most likely, as these national agreements often do, require complementing investment from the state. I will be progressing those conversations once I have a read from the new federal minister on what that might look like. I think it is just important to keep a bit of perspective in relation to questions around the savings targets year, about how they will be met, the discretion the chief executive has, the comments from the Treasurer that there is no expectation that it is FTEs, and our resolve to make sure that we negotiate a new agreement for South Australia that sees more money flow to skills and training in this state.

The CHAIR: Member for Finniss, you have some omnibus questions. Give the member for Morialta a bit of a rest.

Mr BASHAM: Omnibus questions on notice:

1. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, what is the total cost of machinery of government changes incurred between 22 March 2022 and 30 June 2022?

2. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, which administrative units were created, abolished or transferred to another department or agency between 22 March 2022 and 30 June 2022 and what was the cost or saving in each case?

3. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, how many executive appointments have been made since 22 March 2022 and what is the annual salary and total employment cost for each position?

4. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, how many executive positions have been abolished since 22 March 2022 and what was the annual salary and total employment cost for each position?

5. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, what has been the total cost of executive position terminations since 22 March 2022?

6. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, will the minister provide a breakdown of expenditure on consultants and contractors with a total estimated cost above \$10,000 engaged between 22 March 2022 and 30 June 2022, listing the name of the consultant, contractor or service supplier, the method of appointment, the reason for the engagement and the estimated total cost of the work?

7. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, will the minister provide an estimate of the total cost to be incurred in 2022-23 for consultants and contractors, and for each case in which a consultant or contractor has already been engaged at a total estimated cost above \$10,000, the name of the consultant or contractor, the method of appointment, the reason for the engagement and the total estimated cost?

8. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, will the minister advise whether it will be subject to the 1.7 per cent efficiency dividend for 2022-23 to which the government has committed and, if so, the budgeted dollar amount to be contributed in each case and how the saving will be achieved?

9. For each department or agency reporting to the minister, how many surplus employees were there at 30 June 2022, and for each surplus employee, what is the title or classification of the position and the total annual employment cost?

10. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, what is the number of executive staff to be cut to meet the government's commitment to reduce spending on the employment of executive staff by \$41.5 million over four years and, for each position to be cut, its classification, total remuneration cost and the date by which the position will be cut?

11. For each department and agency reporting to the minister:

- What savings targets have been set for 2022-23 and each year of the forward estimates;
- What is the estimated FTE impact of these measures?

12. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, will the minister advise what share it will receive of the \$1.5 billion the government proposes to use over four years of uncommitted capital reserves held in the budget at the time it took office and the purpose for which this funding will be used in each case?

13. For each department and agency reporting to the minister:

- What was the actual FTE count at 30 June 2022 and what is the projected actual FTE count for the end of each year of the forward estimates;

- What is the budgeted total employment cost for each year of the forward estimates; and
- How many targeted voluntary separation packages are estimated to be required to meet budget targets over the forward estimates and what is their estimated cost ?

14. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, how much is budgeted to be spent on goods and services for 2022-23 and for each year of the forward estimates?

15. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, how many FTEs are budgeted to provide communication and promotion activities in 2022-23 and each year of the forward estimates and what is their estimated employment cost?

16. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, what is the total budgeted cost of government-paid advertising, including campaigns, across all mediums in 2022-23?

17. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, please provide for each individual investing expenditure project administered, the name, total estimated expenditure, actual expenditure incurred to 30 June 2022 and budgeted expenditure for 2022-23, 2023-24, 2024-25 and 2025-26.

18. For each grant program or fund the minister is responsible for, please provide the following information for the 2022-23, 2023-24, 2024-25 and 2025-26 financial years:

- Name of the program or fund;
- The purpose of the program or fund;
- Budgeted payments into the program or fund;
- Budgeted expenditure from the program or fund; and
- Details, including the value and beneficiary, or any commitments already made to be funded from the program or fund.

Mrs PEARCE: I refer to Budget Paper 5, Budget Measures Statement, for the Innovation portfolio, page 89. How is the government supporting industry with a focus on improving apprentice and training outcomes?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I thank the member for King for her question and am very pleased to give the committee some information about this important topic and what this Malinauskas government is doing to support industry, with a focus particularly on improving apprentice and trainee outcomes.

We are clear on the need to address the challenges facing industry to ensure South Australia is best positioned to realise the workforce opportunities that come from economic growth. Our mentoring and coaching are widely recognised practices in the modern workplace, building an on-the-job learning culture committed to connecting people to opportunities and support to retain talent.

Apprenticeships and traineeships offer the next generation of skilled workers a significant opportunity to connect industry experience and workplace participation. However, finding the right pathway and navigating the world of work and combining training can be challenging for employers and apprentices.

In answers to some other questions today I shared some anecdotes that have stayed with me, particularly in terms of a fascinating tour I had, when I was still the shadow minister, of the REDARC facility in Lonsdale. Everyone here will be familiar with that brand, and there are probably some people here who, like me, are fond of pretty much everything they make—I would love to shove it all in my car if my wife would let me, but she will not. They are an incredible South Australian success story.

They are a global brand now and respected as an industry leader, and the stuff is made right here in South Australia. It is a fantastic story, and the man behind the growth of REDARC is Anthony

Kittel, who is also someone who is really committed to South Australian manufacturing, advanced manufacturing. He is also committed to making sure that he gives apprentices and trainees a go.

I have to say that I was alarmed when I went there, and the questions I asked as the then shadow minister for Skills and Training were really about, 'What support over and above the support that you currently get to nurture and support your apprentices through from commencement to completion do you need?' I said, 'Anthony, I regularly hear from employers that that is getting a bit harder, not due to any failings of employers, but due often to more complex home lives or personal challenges. Issues around mental health regularly come up.'

He shared a story with me. They had an apprentice who was I think close to three years into the four-year apprenticeship, so he was really close to completing it and there was a job on offer there for him at REDARC if he managed to complete the apprenticeship. Out of the blue, with no indication, he stopped coming to work and was routinely calling in sick.

Anthony took it upon himself, as the Chief Executive of REDARC, to start dropping around to the apprentice's house on his way to work in the morning to knock on the door and check in on him. He discovered that he was up playing Call of Duty or Fortnite, or whatever it is the kids are playing at the moment. My daughter has just discovered Minecraft, which is an enormous problem in our household at the moment, mainly because mum and dad do not understand how it works.

He was dropping around making sure he was up, giving him a lift to work, saying, 'You are only one year from finishing this and having a job.' Even with that incredible support from the chief executive of a company that was going global, experiencing incredible growth, that young person just quit because he basically did not care enough and wanted to stay at home and play computer games instead.

Setting aside the incredible support that Anthony Kittel has provided young people in his business, and it really is a beacon to other employers of what can be done even by people who are as senior and as busy as Anthony Kittel, I think it is alarming in terms of what we are asking employers to do now on top of the daily jobs they have in terms of running often incredibly busy businesses, global businesses—that is, to also be in charge of the wellbeing of the young people who are working on their site. It is in many cases, I think, just more than we can possibly expect of them.

I am very keen to partner with industry, partner with our group training organisations and registered training organisations to see what we can do as a government to try to take a little bit of that burden off them so that they can focus on running their businesses and growing their businesses and the jobs that that will create. Of course, if they do that, there will be more apprenticeship spots and there will be more traineeship spots for other young people, and it will leave a bit more of the work around pastoral care and nurturing young people through the role to other people.

Industry-led mentoring programs offer apprentices and trainees access to industry-specific supports designed to equip them for success and keep them in the industry. Improved engagement, retention and completion of apprenticeships or apprentices help alleviate skill shortages. We know that because if we are, for example, seeing 50 per cent go through to completion, a hell of a lot of work, effort and cost are going in from GTOs, RTOs, training providers and employers who are directly employing apprentices, which in 50 per cent of cases does not amount to a completed apprenticeship or most likely a job in the workforce.

The government is investing \$1.28 million in industry-based outreach and mentoring programs for this specific purpose. The Master Builders Born to Build outreach program will strengthen pathways into the building and construction industry for secondary school and vocational education and training students over the next four years.

One of the first trips out into the field, if I could put it that way, I got to do as the minister was to join Will Frogley and some of his team who are there at Master Builders to go out and mentor apprentices on the worksite. We got to visit the incredible dig site, the construction site next to SAHMRI, where the proton therapy facility is going to be built, and talk to the senior people there about the same kinds of challenges, to be honest, that they are facing and that Anthony Kittel faced.

One of the things passed on to me, which I am sure the member for King will be interested in, is that the more senior workers on that site said they have never in their careers—and a number

of them had worked for 30 years—found it as hard to get tradies to take a lead tradie position for a few more dollars to be in charge of a couple of extra young people. They said that increasingly they are finding those younger people are just not interested in the extra responsibility, even though it might come with some more dollars, whereas before people were knocking the door down to get those roles; now they are literally begging people to take on those roles. That was an interesting perspective.

We got to go to a private building site as well and talk to the apprentices there. I was really impressed by the rapport the representative from Master Builders had with something like the 80 apprentices he is responsible for, spending his entire working week driving from site to site, speaking to apprentices on behalf of Master Builders to make sure they are tracking alright, talking to the employer in charge of the apprentice, asking how they are going. I was privy to a couple of very frank conversations from some builders who had been in the industry for 50 years and who said that the last couple were rubbish but that this one is pretty good, which is important for a minister to see.

It showed the importance of the role Master Builders were playing with that outreach program. When I heard one on one directly from the young apprentices about how this particular person had helped them stay in, even when they were having tough experiences with employers they might not have got along with, they would either try to work on that relationship so they could continue or find them another site or another employer where they could continue their apprenticeship.

I am very pleased we will be investing \$280,000 over the 2022-23 and 2023-24 periods as well as with the Motor Trade Association, the Automotive Trades Mentoring program, to deliver additional support to retain automotive apprentices and trainees to increase training completions. I got to do a visit at the MTA facility recently for their expo and talk to young people undertaking their apprenticeships, and some of the employers looking for new apprentices, and speak to representatives from the MTA about what they are doing to make sure that their offering in terms of electric vehicles is sufficient to make sure the people who graduate have the skills to work on the next generation of cars.

We are working with both Master Builders and the Motor Trade Association to help and support them with the mentoring programs they have in place. I am very confident that will result in better outcomes for the apprentices, better outcomes for the employers, better outcomes for the RTOs and GTOs and a higher completion rate that will see more of the investment that we are all collectively putting into these young people come to fruition and see them enter the workforce.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I go to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 173. The Highlights talk about supporting career pathways, including apprenticeships and traineeships. Can the minister identify how many apprenticeships and traineeships there have been in the public sector in each of the last four years, and how many are expected to be in each year of the forward estimates?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I am told that the Attorney-General is actually the minister responsible—that might come as a surprise; it did to me as well—for the delivery of traineeships in the public sector. I stand to be corrected on that, but I understand he was asked questions about that yesterday, I think.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Can I clarify then. I understand the Attorney-General may well be responsible for a particular program, and it is possible that he is responsible for everything to do with apprentices and traineeships in the public sector. Given that there is funding that goes from the Department for Innovation and Skills, as I understand it, towards the delivery of these through grants and subsidies to public sector traineeships, is the minister able to find out how many trainees and apprentices have been hosted in the public sector over each of the last four years and are scheduled to be over the next four years?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: We shall try to do that. If we cannot, or if it is a matter that another arm of government is responsible for, we perhaps can refer that on to them.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I thank the minister for that. While making that inquiry, a subset of that question is: how many of those numbers were hosted through a group training

organisation in each of the relevant years as well? If it is possible to find one number, then perhaps it is possible to find both.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: We will attempt to find that detail for the member for Morialta.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I am very grateful. On the same page, and I am assured there is a reference elsewhere, can the minister advise how the government expenditure per annual hours of VET delivery will be achieved, down from \$22.30 to \$19.80?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I will pass over to Madeline Richardson to provide an answer on that one.

Ms RICHARDSON: I believe you were referring to the government expenditure per annual hours of VET delivery and the differential between the \$22.30 and the \$19.80. In response to that, my advice would be that there are a range of factors that impact on the cost per hour of delivery, including class sizes, including where training is being delivered and including demand as well. I would say all of those are considerations in that projection. The estimated result is also influenced by policy settings and priorities as well.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Following on from that answer, are there any particular courses that are expected to be targeted in order to assist in reducing that hourly rate of delivery that is being sought?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: For the sake of a bit of clarity, my understanding is that there has been no change to subsidies in terms of a reduction. I want to make that clear from the outset. I might need to turn to Mr Reid or Madeline to explain how it works because I probably cannot provide that level of detail to you, but there have been no cuts to the subsidies.

Ms RICHARDSON: Subsidies are paid in relation to activity delivered by training organisations and they are also informed by a range of factors and reviewed yearly as well.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Is VET commissioning modelling intended to be used to assist with reducing the hourly rate on average?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I will pass over to Madeline again for this.

Ms RICHARDSON: In response to your question, I would probably just reiterate that the level of subsidy is set by understanding a range of factors that determine how much we might pay per hour and, as I said earlier, looking at demand, looking at class sizes and looking at other priorities that there might be around as well to determine that.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Moving to another budget line, I refer to Budget Paper 5, page 90, in relation to the Tauondi asset sale. Can the minister advise, in relation to the transfer of ownership of the Tauondi college land and buildings from the state government, what level of ongoing funding will be provided for asset maintenance support as well as any training funding?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: It stands at about \$150,000 a year.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: To be clear, my understanding is that last year there was about \$830,000 worth of peppercorn lease arrangements so that support annually will be replaced by the gift of the land. There was about \$150,000 in terms of asset maintenance support, and from the minister's answer it is proposed that that funding continue at the same level. Is that coming out of this program and will, therefore, that stream of funding now come from the Department for Education?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: The budget line to which I referred, the roughly \$150,000 per year, transfers across to Education so it will be there for that in future years.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Perhaps I can be helpful and give the minister an opportunity to confirm that it will also be quarantined from any further cuts as a result of this program having to find \$4 million worth of efficiencies per year.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Again, that is a decision for the chief executive. From the discussions that we have had around our commitment on Tauondi so far, I do not anticipate any cuts being

applied. In fact, there is a fair bit of work I think we are going to have to do with Tauondi to make sure—

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: You have a tremendous opportunity here, minister, to provide some advice to the education chief executive in relation to this funding and giving them certainty that it will continue.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: We are certainly committed to Tauondi, I can tell you that, and the transfer. In fact, just last sitting week the Deputy Premier, the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and I met with Professor Buckskin and some others from Tauondi to discuss the challenges they face. We are committed to the future of Tauondi. I certainly cannot see how applying any of the efficiencies that are there for the training and skills area to Tauondi is going in any way to help them get back on their feet, which is what we dearly want them to do. I think that is probably as far as I can go at this point.

Mr ODENWALDER: Perhaps as a supplementary to that, on the same budget line, on the Tauondi asset sale, can the minister outline how it supports learning opportunities for Aboriginal students and what progress has been made?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I thank the member for Elizabeth for the very important question. As I stated before, we are committed to the future of Tauondi. I have been in regular communication with both the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and the Deputy Premier, who has a very large degree of interest in Tauondi as well, both in her current role and in her previous roles.

The Malinauskas government has committed to ensuring that Tauondi college is owned by Aboriginal people for Aboriginal people and to giving it a permanent foundation in the community on Kurna land. The measure in this budget provides \$8 million in 2022-23 to transfer ownership of Tauondi college's land and buildings. I think this is an important part of our acknowledging and recognising the significance of quality training and employment that Tauondi has delivered in a culturally safe, community-based environment since as far back as 1973.

From my discussions over a number of years not just with Minister Maher in the other place and the Deputy Premier but also with people like Professor Buckskin, I know the high regard in which Tauondi is held in the Aboriginal community. They are passionate about preserving it. We are passionate about making sure they can deliver on that. I know that Tauondi's existence as a community organisation also supports and promotes cultural knowledge and understanding across South Australia more broadly, of course, outside Aboriginal communities as well. That is incredibly important.

Importantly, Tauondi delivers vocational training and adult education to Aboriginal students, who achieve success when their learning happens in a community-based setting—and we have spoken a bit about that today already in relation to adult community education—and they are being supported by other members of their community who understand their culture and the challenges that they still face in our society.

Tauondi also partners with many Aboriginal countries across South Australia and works hard to build the foundation skills of Aboriginal young people and adults to set them up for success in further education and then, of course, into employment. Up to now, Tauondi has operated on land owned by the government and uses buildings and other assets owned by the government. A considered transfer of land, building and assets with Tauondi and other community stakeholders is an important step towards strengthening its community and social impact.

With regard to long-term sustainability, which I mentioned in my answer to the excellent question from the member for Elizabeth, we need to look here at long-term sustainability over and above the transfer of land. That was really the topic of conversation with Professor Buckskin, Minister Maher and the Deputy Premier about how we secure that long-term sustainability for Tauondi into the future, making sure it is done under Aboriginal leadership as well.

I will perhaps elaborate a little on what we discussed at that meeting last sitting week with the Attorney-General, the Deputy Premier and members of the Tauondi board. Following that meeting and the very frank conversation that we had about the effect of the ending of the previous funding agreement that was in place with Tauondi and the effect of COVID as well, in terms of the cessation of some of their training, and a difficulty in keeping their own workforce to provide that

training into the future, I asked the Department for Innovation and Skills to progress the work as a priority in conjunction with Tauondi's board.

I have also had a number of conversations already with Professor Westwell about how we best support Tauondi into the future. I am also keen to see if we can pursue some opportunities for Tauondi through the new Albanese federal government because I think there might be some opportunities there as well. I am hoping that I can join with Minister Maher and the Deputy Premier to do that.

I might complete my answer by passing on another excellent communication from the chief executive of the education department, who is in regular contact with me now on the phone, which is good. He reiterates that there are no plans to change the funding to support Tauondi and the maintenance of its facility, which of course will be good news to everyone here. I am hoping that we can rebuild this very important institution. I hope to have more good news down the track on that front for members of this place.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: As a supplementary to that, I understand that about \$420,000 in funding support was also provided to Tauondi last year, in addition to the \$150,000 in maintenance support. Is the minister in a position to identify the quantum of funding that will be provided to Tauondi to ensure that it is able to both deliver the courses that it seeks to deliver and continue the transformation the board has identified as an opportunity for the organisation in the coming years?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I might provide a little bit of background and then hand over to one of my learned colleagues to add extra detail. In terms of the historical funding agreements that Tauondi has received from government for the delivery of training and other services, in 2015-16, it was 2.225; in 2016-17, it was the same amount; in 2017-18, it was 2.5, adjusted for CPI; in 2018-19, it was 2.5; and in 2019-20 it was 2.5, at which point that funding line was no longer continued.

I think that was certainly a topic of conversation at the meeting I had with board members in the week before last about the effect the cessation of that grant, in the vicinity of \$2.5 million, has had on their long-term sustainability, on top of the effects of COVID on their delivery model.

In terms of the member's more specific question around support going forward, I can say that flowing from the meeting I had with the board, and conversations my staff and I have had subsequently with the chief executives, both Mr Reid and Professor Westwell, those issues or requests are under active consideration right now. I am hopeful that I will be able to update the member very soon about the results of those negotiations and considerations.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Thank you; I appreciate it. Can we go to page 174, expenses. Earlier this morning, we talked about the technical colleges that are being delivered by the Department for Education. Within those technical colleges is the anticipation that training will take place, which presumably will be funded to a large extent, if not completely, through the program that is currently under examination. Has the department had any input into the design, governance and model related to these technical colleges? Are we able to identify over the forward estimates how many extra apprentices or trainees, the technical colleges—take Findon, for example—are expected to deliver?

The CHAIR: Just give me that reference again.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I am looking at the program summary, page 174, grants and subsidies of \$358 million. I am anticipating that in the years to come that line will be applied to the funding of these programs.

The CHAIR: I think the only question you could ask is: does the funding provide for those programs now? I think that is the extent of it.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: The funding line applies to the forward estimates, sir.

The CHAIR: Well, is it in the forward estimates or not?

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: We are about to find out.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I think the answer that I can give the member is similar to an answer I have already probably given. I am not saying that I will take it on notice, but I will have more detail, I hope, soon.

The model is still being worked through, as I have said in response to questions earlier. We are doing that very closely with industry for obvious reasons about making sure that what is offered at the technical colleges are the skills and courses that employers like BAE, who joined us yesterday at Findon, are actually looking for. That is underway. Negotiation, or consultation rather, with the Department for Innovation and Skills I know will be part of that broader consultation as well of course. I guess once we have landed what the actual model will be, we will be able to answer the question the member asked in a bit better detail than I can right now.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: There is a fellow called Ryan, who is appearing in paid TV advertising, talking about how much he is looking forward to these technical colleges delivering apprentices he might be able to take on. How is it that the minister is saying that the model has not been determined yet and that we do not know if there will be apprentices or how many apprentices when the government is willing to spend taxpayer dollars on advertising, welcoming the fact that they will?

The CHAIR: Is that advertising part of your portfolio?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: The advertising is not, no.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: The advertising is about this portfolio, sir.

The CHAIR: In that case, you can answer if you wish, but I am happy for you not to answer.

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I guess what I would say is just that obviously what we want the technical colleges to achieve—and I have said this in an answer to previous questions today—is to provide a pathway for people from year 10 to year 12 into vocational education and training and then into the workforce. Part of that is to make sure that we try to provide people who are, and I said this earlier this morning, more apprenticeship ready than we have had in the past.

I think we have probably established pretty clearly that the feedback we are getting from industry and the feedback we are getting from employers who directly employ apprentices, as well as the feedback we have very clearly had from GTOs and RTOs, including ones such as the MTA, is that there are issues around the readiness of the people they are taking on board to undertake an apprenticeship and actually complete an apprenticeship. We know that these technical colleges will produce people who can go on and do apprenticeships, as I think is outlined in the advertisement to which the member refers.

I do not think there is any question of their ability to do that, but there are some things that we are obviously still working through and discussing in terms of the finer details of how the model will work. I have already spoken at length on many occasions, including at Findon yesterday and at Mount Gambier the week before last, about how we will be offering skills around some of the more traditional trades as well because we have skill shortages in a whole heap of those areas at the moment, including, to name a few, electricians, plumbers and many of those.

No doubt our colleges will have to cater for those if they are to do what they are intended to do and help us meet those skill shortages. There is no surprise in that respect that we are already fielding not just queries on enrolment from parents who might like to see their kids attend one of our five technical colleges but also questions from employers who have traditionally employed apprentices about when they are going to come online and how they can make the most of it and benefit from them.

The CHAIR: We have a very small question with a small answer.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Thank you, sir. I note that we started a couple of minutes late, so I am grateful for your forbearance. Minister, did anybody from the group within government that is putting together the TV ads with Ryan in them speak to your office, you or the Department for Innovation and Skills about the detail of how many apprentices would be delivered by these technical colleges prior to those ads going to air?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: Can I have the question again, please?

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: Did anybody from the group within government that is putting together those TV advertisements paid for by the taxpayer speak to either the minister, his office or the Department for Innovation and Skills to check whether or not there were definitely going to be apprentices underway in these technical colleges before putting those ads to air?

The Hon. B.I. BOYER: I do not want to end on a negative note after it has been such a cordial estimates hearing, but I do not think the question relates to anything in the budget papers for which I am responsible. Having said that, we are certainly talking about, at the very least, pre-apprenticeships, and we have discussed that at length today. I do not see any indication that there is anything inaccurate about the ad to which the minister refers. From memory, I do not think anyone spoke to me about the content of the ad. It is not something I have been involved in.

The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER: I am sure Ryan will be disappointed.

The CHAIR: The allotted time has now expired. I declare the examination of the proposed payments for the Department for Innovation and Skills adjourned and referred to Committee B for further examination. I thank the members of the committee and I thank the minister and his staff for what was a very civil committee meeting today.

At 16:33 the committee adjourned to Thursday 23 June 2022 at 09:00.