

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY**Friday, 18 July 2014****ESTIMATES COMMITTEE B****Chair:**

Mr L.K. Odenwalder

Members:

Hon. P. Caica

Mr T.S. Bell

Mr J.P. Gee

Mr E.J. Hughes

Mr S.K. Knoll

Mr D.G. Pisoni

*The committee met at 10:30**Estimates Vote*

DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT, \$2,614,395,000
ADMINISTERED ITEMS FOR THE DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT, \$238,563,000

Minister:

Hon. J.M. Rankine, Minister for Education and Child Development.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr T. Harrison, Chief Executive, Department for Education and Child Development.

Ms J. Johnston, Deputy Chief Executive, Department for Education and Child Development.

Ms J. Riedstra, Deputy Chief Executive, Department for Education and Child Development.

Mr P. O'Loughlin, Executive Director, Human Resources, Department for Education and Child Development.

Mr C. Bernardi, Chief Financial Officer, Department for Education and Child Development.

The CHAIR: Welcome to Estimates Committee B. We have a relatively informal approach, as most of you know. I understand there are government questions today so, as a rule of thumb we will be have three then three. Obviously, that is up to my discretion. All questions are to be directed to the minister and not to the advisers. All questions must be based on relevant lines of expenditure in the budget. I declare the proposed payments open for examination and refer members to the Agency Statements, Volume 2. I call on the Minister for Education and Child Development, if she wishes, to make an opening statement and to introduce her advisers.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Sir, can I commence by acknowledging the tragedy that has occurred overnight with the shooting down of the Malaysia Airlines aeroplane and the loss of Australian lives. I think it is a great tragedy for our nation and I pray that we do not hear of any more Australians who have lost their lives on that plane.

I would like to make an opening statement. This government is very proud of its record of investing in education and, since coming to government in 2002, we have doubled the funding per student and tripled the budget for child protection. We have more teachers, school support workers, preschool staff and child protection workers. We have invested \$1.7 billion in infrastructure projects. Thousands of students now have the best possible environment in which to learn—modern buildings with state-of-the-art facilities and resources.

Among them are the students at Roma Mitchell Secondary College, John Hartley School, Mark Oliphant College, Adelaide West Special Education Centre and the Blair Athol North B-7 School. These new schools are improving retention and attendance, inspiring students' sense of pride and enthusiasm for learning, boosting opportunities for innovative teaching and promoting more united school communities, and I can think of no better investment.

This budget continues our investment in building world-class education care and protection systems and delivers on our election commitments. Overall we are investing \$3.27 billion in education, care and protection in 2014-15, including \$96.7 million in capital works on a range of projects and initiatives which will ensure more South Australian children have the best possible environments in which to learn.

We will build a brand new high school in Adelaide, a state-of-the-art facility to cater for an extra 1,000 students from the CBD and inner suburbs. We are supporting all public school students by ensuring each of them has access to a counsellor and we are establishing a parent portal to make it easier for parents to communicate with their child's teacher and school. We are currently delivering 48 education and child development related infrastructure projects at a cost of \$170.6 million, creating what is estimated to be more than 930 jobs.

So that our state's future workforce, our students, are prepared to take on those future jobs, we are establishing new specialist schools so they can develop the skills they need for STEM career pathways. This includes specific programs at Seaview High School, The Heights School and Hamilton Secondary College. We are also providing \$50,000 grants to local partnerships which will help them develop specialisations reflecting the aspirations of the local community and linking in with local businesses and industry. This could include science, sport, languages or even entrepreneurship. This builds on specialisations already available in many of our schools.

We are raising the status and quality of our teachers and leaders. By 2020 all new teachers will be expected to have a master's degree, with further qualifications for our leaders. We are supporting 240 current teachers study for a master's degree and 120 school leaders develop advanced leadership skills by providing scholarships and grants.

I was pleased today to release the Department for Education and Child Development's new strategic plan, the result of 18 months of consultation with more than 9,000 people, including staff, parents, children and others in the wider community. This three-year strategy identifies six priority areas for action within the department: learning achievement, health and wellbeing, child safety, levels of engagement, access to services and DECD's overall systems. These priorities will help us to continue to shape the department as a high performing, professional and accountable organisation, ensure all services we deliver support staff on the front line in education and care settings, and support children's development and strengthen relationships with children and their families and carers.

The plan gives us strong direction to help us obtain truly world-class education and care systems which ensure all South Australian children have the opportunity to succeed. Without question it is an ambitious plan, but our children deserve nothing less. Unlike the federal government, we are keeping our promise to South Australians and funding the full six years of the Gonski agreement, worth \$72.3 million over the forward estimates and \$229 million over six years. We continue to fight to hold the federal government to their side of this historic deal and deliver their share of the final two years of the Gonski agreement—funding of \$335 million which South Australian schools stand to lose.

Through our children's centres, our preschools, four of which have achieved the highest rating possible under the National Quality Framework and our schools, we are working to ensure

every child, no matter where they live or their family life, get the best opportunities to succeed. I am happy to take questions.

The CHAIR: Excellent, thank you, minister. Before we go to questions, does the lead speaker have any opening statement?

Mr PISONI: I will take the opportunity to make a statement, if I may. The minister made the point of \$229 million but the budget papers actually say \$222.9 million is the state government Gonski commitment, so we might go there a bit later on.

I would like to take the opportunity for an opening address to briefly comment on the recent Canberra blame game being used by the state government and the education minister to distract from the important issues confronting education in our state. Unfortunately, Labor's Gonski myth has destroyed constructive debate over education in Australia at both the state and federal level. The fact is that there has been an increase of 200 per cent in education spending across Australia in the last 20 years by federal and state governments of all flavours, but corresponding improvements in Australian education outcomes have not necessarily resulted, particularly here in South Australia. Much of it has been spent on reducing class sizes, but that has not necessarily improved quality. The truth is that around the world it is being increasingly recognised that simply putting more and more money into education without making the changes necessary to improve outcomes gets our students nowhere.

I noticed that the minister's announcement today about changes to the structure and management of the education system confirms that for the last 12 years this government has had it terribly wrong when it comes to management of education funding and management of education outcomes here in South Australia. Debate in education should be about quality and outcomes, not exclusively about funding.

The Gonski funding circus promoted by the former federal Labor government—who, last year, spent \$21 million of taxpayers' money promoting it through advertising, more than South Australia's federal funding this year, in a deal signed by the minister and the Premier—was, quite frankly, a dogs breakfast. There were 28 separate and different funding arrangements across Australia, yet it was described as being a national model. It is acknowledged, of course, that South Australia signed up for the worst deal of all the states, with the least amount of money in the forward estimates. In my view Premier Weatherill and the current minister did this to assist federal Labor to keep as much money in the kitty as it could to help sign other states in the lead up to the federal election. Most of the money was intentionally backed out to beyond the forward estimates years in the South Australian deal. Labor put its party before the students here in South Australia.

In the recent federal budget, school recurrent funding spending represented a record high, with recurrent funding of \$64.5 billion for government and non-government schools over the next four years to 2017-18, \$1.2 billion more than the previous government. Members would recall that the previous government, in their final financial statements, their costing document before the election, actually removed \$1.2 billion of Gonski money that was allocated for those states that had not signed prior to the election, removed that from their costing documents. Of course, that had to be replaced in the forward estimates.

This is a \$5 billion increase in recurrent spending over this period, a rise of 38 per cent. Commonwealth funding growth for all school sectors—government and non-government—for recurrent and capital spending increases are 8.7 per cent in 2014-15, 8.9 per cent in 2015-16, 8.9 per cent in 2016-17, and 6.6 per cent in 2017-18. Commonwealth funding for South Australian government schools over the forward estimates is \$334.1 million in 2013-14, \$379.1 million in 2014-15, \$401.4 million in 2015-16, \$424.3 million in 2016-17, and \$457.8 million in 2017-18.

The recurrent allocation to South Australia for government schools by the commonwealth grows from \$334.1 million in 2013-14 to \$457.8 million in 2017-18—an increase of \$123.7 million, which represents an increase of 37 per cent over five years. I point out that that is the lowest increase in the forward estimates of all the states because of the deal negotiated by the then Gillard government and the Premier. In the 2017-18 financial year we will receive a total of \$457.8 million for government schools, an increase in funding from the commonwealth of \$33.5 million, which represents a 7.9 per cent increase on the previous year.

Despite the minister running around the state claiming cuts in commonwealth funding, what she does not point out in her misleading correspondence to hard-pressed school governing councils is the money she has already skimmed from even the small amount of funding that has flowed from the first year of the Better Schools money. Nearly \$3 million of the \$16.6 million in this year's funding was held back at head office for project officers. I discussed this strategy when I visited the Queensland department back in April, and they were surprised that not all the money was going to schools. That was certainly the instruction they were given with their additional federal money under the Better Schools deal, and every cent went to schools in Queensland.

The minister and the state government are looking, of course, to replace their own cuts with funding from Canberra. In my view it is no coincidence that the state funding contribution of \$222.9 million is almost identical to the \$223 million earmarked to be cut from the South Australian education budget over four years from the 2013-14 year. It should be embarrassing for both the state Labor government and their colleagues in the federal Labor opposition that even ABC Fact Check has concluded that the federal opposition's and the shadow education minister Kate Ellis's claims about cuts to education in the federal budget were untrue. The quote from ABC Fact Check is: 'Ms Ellis is sprouting rubbery figures.'

The federal budget papers quite clearly show federal funding for our state's schools set to increase substantially over the next four years. Alleged funding cuts being trumpeted by the minister beyond 2017-18 are simply the gap between fantasy and reality into which her party notoriously falls on issues of fiscal responsibility.

Despite the best efforts of the many fine principals and teachers, our state's NAPLAN and PISA rankings have lagged the rest of the nation under the lack of direction, leadership and innovation of this state Labor government and its conga line of education ministers.

The state government and the minister need to stop focusing on playing politics with commonwealth funding and the distraction of a Canberra blame game and begin focusing on their own responsibilities to improve educational outcomes here in South Australia and the things that are important to our school communities. I seek leave to insert a statistical table into *Hansard* explaining the federal government funding contribution between the states as discussed in my opening statement.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Point of order, sir. I would question whether it is appropriate to insert tables in an opening statement.

Mr PISONI: I am seeking leave. The standing orders—

The CHAIR: Member for Unley, there has been a point of order. I will just consider it. We will take that under advisement and get back to you with an answer. Thank you, member for Unley, for your opening statement. Supplementary questions are the exception rather than the rule in estimates committee hearings and I remind you that the rule of thumb will be three questions on each side. Does the lead member for the opposition have any questions for the minister?

Mr PISONI: I do, thank you, sir, and I present my table.

Growth over the Fees (13/14—17/18) by sector										
Current Government arrangements (includes \$1.2b extra at MYEFO and 14/15 budget measure parameters); per BP3 p36										
State	Sector	2013/14 (\$m)		Total	\$m 2014/15	13/14 to 14/15		\$m 2015/16	14/15 to 15/16	
		SPP NP	+ SFF			\$ growth	% growth		\$ growth	% growth
NSW	Gov	671.7	735.7	1,407.4	1,551.8	144.4	10.3%	1,716.5	164.7	10.6%
NSW	Non-Gov	1,323.7	1,376.4	2,700.1	2,831.8	131.7	4.9%	3,008.2	176.4	6.2%
VIC	Gov	486.9	548.4	1,035.3	1,171.3	136.0	13.1%	1,291.4	120.1	10.3%
VIC	Non-Gov	1,088.7	1,134.1	2,222.8	2,348.0	125.2	5.6%	2,522.9	174.9	7.4%
QLD	Gov	440.7	523.1	963.8	1,128.1	164.3	17.0%	1,300.2	172.1	15.3%

Growth over the Fees (13/14—17/18) by sector													
Current Government arrangements (includes \$1.2b extra at MYEFO and 14/15 budget measure parameters); per BP3 p36													
State	Sector	2013/14 (\$m)			Total	\$m		13/14 to 14/15		\$m		14/15 to 15/16	
		SPP NP	+ SFF			2014/15	\$ growth	% growth	2015/16	\$ growth	% growth		
QLD	Non-Gov	876.7	918.2	1,794.9	1,927.3	132.4	7.4%	2,101.1	173.8	9.0%			
WA	Gov	220.0	245.1	465.1	528.2	63.1	13.6%	597.7	69.5	13.2%			
WA	Non-Gov	437.8	461.0	898.8	970.6	71.8	8.0%	1,064.6	94.0	9.7%			
SA	Gov	149.8	184.3	334.1	379.1	45.0	13.5%	401.3	22.2	5.9%			
SA	Non-Gov	330.0	338.3	668.3	694.8	26.5	4.0%	737.3	42.5	6.1%			
TAS	Gov	51.3	71.3	122.6	147.8	25.2	20.6%	159.5	11.7	7.9%			
TAS	Non-Gov	85.4	89.8	175.2	186.6	11.4	6.5%	201.9	15.3	8.2%			
ACT	Gov	31.7	36.2	67.9	73.4	5.5	8.1%	76.1	2.7	3.7%			
ACT	Non-Gov	79.1	86.1	165.2	174.3	9.1	5.5%	185.6	11.3	6.5%			
NT	Gov	28.3	63.8	92.1	133.8	41.7	45.3%	146.8	13.0	9.7%			
NT	Non-Gov	50.2	59.6	109.8	125.8	16.0	14.6%	133.7	7.9	6.3%			
Australia	Gov	2,080.4	2,407.8	4,488.2	5,113.6	625.2	13.9%	5,689.5	576.0	11.3%			
Australia	Non-Gov	4,271.6	4,464.1	8,735.7	9,260.4	524.1	6.0%	9,956.7	696.1	7.5%			
Australia	All	6,352.0	6,871.9	13,223.9	14,374.0	1,149.3	8.7%	15,646.2	1,272.1	8.9%			

Table continued

State	Sector	\$m			2017/18	16/17 to 17/18		TOTAL 2013/14 to 2017/18		All Sectors over FE	
		2016/17	\$ growth	% growth		\$ growth	% growth	\$ growth	% growth	\$ growth	% growth
NSW	Gov	1,964.3	247.8	14.4%	2,105.2	140.9	7.2%	697.8	49.6%	1,355	33.0%
NSW	Non-Gov	3,203.7	195.5	6.5%	3,356.8	153.1	4.8%	656.7	24.3%		
VIC	Gov	1,388.6	97.2	7.5%	1,424.2	35.6	2.6%	388.9	37.6%	1,022	31.4%
VIC	Non-Gov	2,706.3	183.4	7.3%	2,855.8	149.5	5.5%	633.0	28.5%		
QLD	Gov	1,492.5	192.3	14.8%	1,626.1	133.6	9.0%	662.3	68.7%	1,290	46.8%
QLD	Non-Gov	2,274.0	172.9	8.2%	2,422.5	148.5	6.5%	627.6	35.0%		
WA	Gov	664.8	67.1	11.2%	824.8	160.0	24.1%	359.7	77.3%	696	51.0%
WA	Non-Gov	1,157.0	92.4	8.7%	1,235.3	78.3	6.8%	336.5	37.4%		
SA	Gov	424.3	23.0	5.7%	457.8	33.5	7.9%	123.7	37.0%	275	27.4%
SA	Non-Gov	782.9	45.6	6.2%	819.4	36.5	4.7%	151.1	22.6%		
TAS	Gov	172.2	12.7	8.0%	179.5	7.3	4.2%	56.9	46.4%	111	37.2%
TAS	Non-Gov	218.0	16.1	8.0%	229.2	11.2	5.1%	54.0	30.8%		
ACT	Gov	79.5	3.4	4.5%	95.8	16.3	20.5%	27.9	41.1%	67	28.7%

State	Sector	\$m		15/16 to 16/17		\$m		16/17 to 17/18		TOTAL 2013/14 to 2017/18		All Sectors over FE	
		2016/17	\$ growth	% growth	2017/18	\$ growth	% growth	\$ growth	% growth	\$ growth	% growth	\$ growth	% growth
ACT	Non-Gov	197.6	12.0	6.5%	204.3	6.7	3.4%	39.1	23.7%				
NT	Gov	161.5	14.7	10.0%	158.4	-3.1	-1.9%	66.3	72.0%	109	53.9%		
NT	Non-Gov	144.5	10.8	8.1%	152.4	7.9	5.5%	42.6	38.8%				
Aus	Gov	6,347.5	658.2	11.6%	6,871.8	524.1	8.3%	2,384	53.1%	4,925	37.2%		
Aus	Non-Gov	10,684.9	728.7	7.3%	11,277.2	591.7	5.5%	2,542	29.1%				
Aus	All	17,032.4	1,386.9	8.9%	18,149.0	1,115.8	6.6%	4,925	37.2%				

Mr PISONI: I refer the minister to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 20, referring to expenses. Last year the budget indicated that there were savings targets from Treasury, in the education department. Those savings targets were detailed in the Budget and Finance Committee on 18 November last year and confirmed by the chief executive in the media on several occasions since then. Minister, are you able to advise whether those budget savings for the 2013-14 year of \$30.237 million were realised? At the time, \$21.483 million of those budget savings were described as being unspecified. Can you also advise what those unspecified savings were?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I thank the member for Unley for his question and for the comments in his opening statement. I congratulate minister Pyne's office on the construction of those words. It is interesting—

Mr PISONI: Point of order, sir. Is the minister prepared to stand by those statements, that that is where my opening comments have come from, as the Speaker (the member for Croydon) asked the Leader of the Opposition just last week in the parliament to stand by statements or withdraw them?

The CHAIR: This is an estimates committee hearing. It is relatively informal—

Mr PISONI: But standing orders are the same, sir.

The CHAIR: Standing orders are the same, but it is relatively informal and I am sure the minister is getting around to answering the question.

Mr PISONI: No; I am asking whether the minister will stand by those statements?

The Hon. P. CAICA: Do you stand by yours?

Mr PISONI: Will the minister stand by those statements?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It was a tongue-in-cheek comment and I am sure—

Mr PISONI: So, you made it up.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: —the member for Unley is—

Mr PISONI: So, you have made it up.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: —very familiar with—

Mr PISONI: You made it up.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: —tongue-in-cheek comments.

Mr PISONI: You made it up.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It was a joke. Loosen up.

The CHAIR: It is relatively informal.

Mr PISONI: I will accept that as being withdrawn, sir. Thank you.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Is the member for Unley willing to stand by his statements that I sent out misleading correspondence?

The CHAIR: I think all members—it is early in the day.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes. Same point of order, sir. Are you willing to stand by your statement that I sent out misleading correspondence?

The CHAIR: Minister—

Mr PISONI: Sir, I ask the questions. The minister is here to answer the questions.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No. I am calling a point of order on your opening statement. Are you prepared—

Mr PISONI: The minister does not ask questions.

The CHAIR: I rule that there is no point of order. The member for Unley's point of order—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: So, he made that up.

The CHAIR: —I rule against that, and I would like the minister to answer the question.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Thank you. So, that must have been tongue-in-cheek too, member for Unley.

Mr PISONI: I do not even know what you are talking about.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It was very interesting to hear the member for Unley sit here and make excuses for the federal government withdrawing \$335 million.

Mr PISONI: Point of order, sir. My question was specific about listed savings targets in the state education budget.

The CHAIR: Yes.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Thank you, sir, and I am happy to answer the question.

The CHAIR: Hang on, minister. Member for Unley, your opening statement was rather provocative and I—

Mr PISONI: The minister is here answering questions, not responding to my opening statement.

The Hon. P. CAICA: Show a bit of respect to the chair.

The CHAIR: Yes, that is right. I am making a ruling. Okay? So, the minister can answer the question and I am going to allow her a bit of leeway because your opening statement was rather provocative and it raised a lot of issues and I am sure the minister will get to answering the question extremely shortly.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I will, sir. The Department for Education and Child Development has an outstanding record when it comes to achieving its budget targets. Sadly, in years 5 and 6 of the Gonski agreement we will not be getting \$335 million from the federal government, as was promised, for our schools across all school sectors in South Australia. It is really interesting that we have an education spokesperson in South Australia who does nothing but talk down education and make up excuses for a federal government that has torn up a duly signed agreement with this state.

Mr PISONI: Point of order, sir. The minister is not responsible—

The CHAIR: Point of order. What is your point of order?

Mr PISONI: The Minister for Education is not responsible for the member for Unley. The member for Unley is responsible for himself. She is responsible for the education budget.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: You are responsible for—

The CHAIR: Luckily that is the case, minister, so I uphold that point of order and ask you to answer the question.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Thank the Lord for that. We will not be getting \$335 million, we will not be getting \$18 million for trade training centres that was committed as well and \$30 million a year for universal access is hanging by a thread, we still have had no commitment from the federal government about providing that funding that will allow our preschoolers to access 15 hours per week of preschool in the year before they attend school. We did not consider those agreements to be fantasy or blue sky promises. We considered those to be valuable investments in the wellbeing of our children and, in fact, a real economic investment in the future of South Australia. Nevertheless, as I said, we have a budget in which we have to operate and we have had an outstanding record when it comes to meeting our targets.

For the 2013-14 financial year, the department is forecasting that the final result will be within budget by an estimated 0.6 of a per cent. In a budget of around \$3.3 billion, this reflects very sound financial management. During 2013-14, the department used a number of strategies to achieve the required savings. The budget is very closely managed, with tight budget rules and delegations, rigorous monthly analysis and reporting to senior executive. This is a strong culture of budget responsibility and it enables one-off benefits to be harvested while long-term strategies are developed. For example, each month an analysis of unspent salary budgets is undertaken. Underspends may occur due to vacancies and timing of staff appointments. The department sets itself a target of \$5 million for one-off salary savings in 2013-14 and this process will continue next year.

Close attention is also given to efficiency measures, no matter how small. In 2013-14 the rental of plants in the state office was discontinued, saving \$40,000 (or 0.5 of an FTE per annum). During July this year printing services in the state office will be managed via a central program of multifunction devices, enabling the decommissioning of printers throughout the building. The new printers will be set to default to black and white and double-sided printing. The estimated saving is \$500,000 per annum (the equivalent of five FTEs). In addition, the excess printers will be made available to our schools and preschools.

We have seen other reductions in operating expenses, notably in vandalism and arson costs. Combined, these two areas resulted in savings against budget of just over \$5 million in 2013-14 (or the equivalent of 50 FTEs). This is likely to continue in 2014-15 and beyond due to the success of the government's security fencing program. We have had a small number of voluntary school closures in recent years and, while all student funding follows the students to their new school, the base funding is a saving of around \$250,000 to \$350,000 per annum (the equivalent of around three FTEs).

In 2012-13, 98 employees accepted targeted voluntary separation packages. The full-year impact of that in 2013-14 was a saving of approximately \$9.4 million per annum. A further 96 employees accepted TVSPs in 2013-14, with potential savings of up to \$10 million to impact in the 2014-15 financial year. These measures, combined with the budget management processes and systems places us in a favourable position to meet future savings measures, using both one-off and ongoing strategies.

The business improvement plan released today, with the 2014-17 strategic plan, highlights a number of changed priorities focused on improved efficiency and effectiveness, whilst maintaining the commitment to high-quality services and support for children and young people and their families. In summary, for 2014-15, the savings target is \$24.5 million, and we have already identified potential savings as follows: up to \$10 million from TVSPs; \$5 million due to salary vacancies and timing in filling those vacancies; \$5 million from arson and vandalism savings; and the balance of \$4.5 million will come from other efficiency measures at which the state office is currently looking.

Mr PISONI: I tracked \$15 million of savings in the 2013-14 year, or thereabouts. We were told in November last year that there would be over \$30 million of savings in 2013-14. Were they achieved?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am advised yes.

Mr PISONI: Can you detail what those savings were? You have given us some detail, but I have tracked \$15 million—I could be wrong, I could have missed something. Are you able to bring something back to the parliament to detail where that \$30.237 million came from?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: You asked me about the unspecified savings, and I think I have outlined the detail around those, and we also achieved the specified savings of \$8 million.

The Hon. P. CAICA: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 20, under the heading of School Education. Will the minister advise the committee on the state government contribution under the Gonski agreement, and the impact of changes to the federal contributions?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I thank the member for Colton for this really important question. Our government has always invested in education, and since coming to government in 2002, as I said in my opening statement, we have doubled the amount of funding per student in our schools. When we signed up to the Gonski agreement, we committed to invest \$12.9 billion over six years for all South Australian schools. In total, this commitment provides an additional \$1.4 billion above 2013 levels, and includes a funding boost of \$229.9 million for all South Australian schools.

At the same time, the commonwealth government committed to providing an additional \$1.57 billion above 2013 levels by indexing funding at an agreed 4.7 per cent and providing a funding boost of \$427 million over six years, a signed agreement between the government of South Australia and the commonwealth government, an agreement that would have seen more teachers, more student support officers and more classroom resources, an agreement that will see our government invest \$11.7 billion in South Australian government schools over the full six years. This includes, for South Australian government schools, \$1.782 billion in 2014, \$1.831 billion in 2015, \$1.891 billion in 2016, \$1.953 billion in 2017, \$2.044 billion in 2018 and \$2.183 billion in 2019.

The member for Colton may also be interested to learn that this investment includes an additional \$392.6 million approved by this government during 2014-15 for government schools over the forward estimates 2014-15 to 2017-18. We will also invest \$1.26 billion in South Australian non-government schools over the full six years of the Gonski agreement. The amounts per annum for South Australian non-government schools are \$183.4 million in 2014, \$190.6 million in 2015, \$199.7 million in 2016, \$208.7 million in 2017, \$226.9 million in 2018 and \$251.9 million in 2019.

We made this commitment and we are honouring it in full. We expect the Abbott federal government to do the same, given they went to the last federal election saying they were on a unity ticket with Labor when it came to school funding. In fact, I remember seeing posters right next to Christopher Pyne's posters, saying that they would commit to the same level of funding. However, we now know the Abbott federal government has broken its promise—a commitment made to parents, a commitment made to teachers and a commitment made to students from all sectors.

What we have heard today is the opposition making excuses for the federal government not honouring that commitment. The federal budget confirms that funding from 2018 will be indexed at an estimated 2.5 per cent, nearly half the agreed 4.7 rate and the funding boost from 2018 will be frozen. We estimate that this will result in \$335 million less in federal funding for South Australian schools than was promised by Tony Abbott and Christopher Pyne. Across the state this equates to \$1,280 per student or an additional 3,000 teachers or 3,900 student support officers.

Government schools in the member for Schubert's electorate stand to lose \$3.7 million in federal funding resources and support. Nuriootpa High alone stands to lose over \$1 million in just two years. In the member for Mount Gambier's electorate—and I am sure he is interested in this—government schools stand to lose \$5.7 million in federal funding resources and support, with Mount Gambier High losing a potential \$1.2 million in just two years. In the member for Unley's electorate, government schools stand to lose a total of \$4.2 million—

Mr PISONI: Point of order. Do the sessional orders apply in estimates, the four-minute answers?

The CHAIR: No, they do not, member for Unley.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: —including Glenunga International High School losing \$1.95 million. I know the member for Unley is unhappy to hear his own local figures, but he can be assured his schools will be advised, have been advised and will continue to be advised about the money they will be losing in just two years because the federal government has ripped up a duly signed agreement. The member for Unley is making excuses for that.

Unlike the Abbott government, we are going to deliver on our commitment not just to public schools but also to our Catholic and independent schools. I can assure members that our government will continue to fight Tony Abbott and Christopher Pyne's cuts. The real question is: will the member for Unley stand up for his schools, for South Australian schools?

On savings, we were clear with the commonwealth before we signed the agreement that we needed to make efficiencies but we would not hit front-line services. Indeed, over the forward estimates, the total DECD budget will grow by around \$800 million in net terms. That means more school counsellors, more allied health services in our children's centres and more resources for schools under our commitment to the Gonski agreement.

Mr PISONI: Supplementary.

The CHAIR: A supplementary. I will allow this one but I will remind you that supplementary questions are the exception rather than the rule in estimates committees.

Mr PISONI: I will try to make it exceptional, sir.

The CHAIR: Excellent, make it exceptional.

Mr PISONI: When the state government signed the Gonski agreement with the former Gillard government, did it inquire as to how the federal government would itself fund years 5 and 6, and whether the funding would come from additional taxes, whether it would come from borrowings, or whether it would come from savings made elsewhere?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We signed an agreement with a duly-elected national government of Australia. They made a commitment of funding for schools here in South Australia and we took them at their word. At the last federal election, Tony Abbott stood up and told South Australian parents, South Australian families, schools, teachers, education sectors and state governments that they would honour that deal dollar for dollar and they have not.

Mr PISONI: So you did not inquire as to how it was going to be funded?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It was not a blue-sky agreement.

Mr PISONI: You did not inquire. How do you know if you did not inquire?

The CHAIR: Order, member for Unley! The minister will be heard in silence.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Sir, he is always so rude. We signed an agreement with the federal government, the commonwealth government of Australia. Of course we did not sit down with them and say, 'How are you raising this money?' How impudent would that be? For goodness sake. We signed an agreement.

Mr PISONI: It is good prudent management.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Stop being rude, David.

Mr PISONI: It is good prudent management.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Stop being rude. It is not prudent management to drill down with the commonwealth government of this nation and ask them how they are going to fund something. We do not do that with your colleagues when they sign an agreement with us and we certainly did not do it with the last government. But what we do know is that we now have to go back and scrutinise every commitment they have ever made. It is unprecedented, absolutely unprecedented, that a commonwealth government would rip up a duly-signed agreement, turn its back on students in this nation and then have a feeble, weak-kneed, lily-livered opposition that is not prepared to stand up for the schools in this state. You are a disgrace and you should not be a shadow spokesperson for public education or education in general.

Mr PISONI: Well, if I do not get that description from you once a month I am disappointed, minister.

The CHAIR: Thank you minister, and thank you, member for Unley, you do not have the call. The member for Giles has the call.

Mr HUGHES: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 25: Performance indicators, year 7 NAPLAN results. Why has the minister resisted moving year 7 into high school, given they would attract a higher level of federal funding and other states have moved to do so; and would this improve NAPLAN results for students?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I thank the member for Giles for his question and I am looking forward to visiting him in his electorate very soon and opening a wonderful new facility for students with a disability in Whyalla. I had the opportunity of visiting a number of his schools prior to the state election and know what a commitment he has to the education of students in his electorate.

It is true that Queensland and Western Australia are moving their year 7s into high school, but let us be clear, it is not because there is an education benefit. Rather it is because those jurisdictions have introduced reception for the first time and their hand was forced in many respects. In Western Australia the move was estimated to cost around \$835 million over a six-year period, followed by annual recurrent costs of \$122 million. In Queensland it was estimated to cost more than \$600 million, with \$300 million alone on capital works. I am advised that options for moving year 7 into high school have been costed from around \$150 million to as much as \$550 million here in South Australia.

With regard to year 7s attracting a higher rate of funding, this is an arbitrary decision made by the federal government and one we would like to see changed. The truth is that NAPLAN testing occurs so early in the year that moving year 7 into high school is unlikely to make any difference to those test results. As the member for Giles rightly pointed out, this is not just about test results but also about educational outcomes generally.

There are arguments for and against moving year 7 into high school. For instance, children tend to receive greater individual attention in primary school, while high school provides greater challenges for advanced students. There is not any quantifiable evidence that moving year 7 into high school improves educational outcomes. I think I generously gave the member for Unley the benefit of the doubt during the election campaign and used a mid-range figure of \$300 million in relation to the potential costs involved in this exercise.

Obviously, the figure is different depending on how you intend to make the change. The opposition committed to this change before the election. This policy was said by the Liberals to cost \$29 million per year. This would only cover the HR portion of the policy. It seems, however, that someone forgot to add in the hundreds of millions of dollars in added infrastructure costs. The government's position is simple: to commit millions of taxpayers' dollars without any proof that there will be an improvement in educational outcomes would be reckless and foolish.

What is more, the member for Stuart and the member for Unley seem at odds over the future of all those small rural primary schools that would become unsustainable if they lost year 7 students to high school. Do we just add those onto the 45 schools closed last time they were in government? It would be a dire set of circumstances for those very small schools. I know the member for Giles has a number of those in his area that would be at significant risk should we do that.

The Hon. P. CAICA: My question refers to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 30 under Net Cost of Providing Services. Minister, can you advise how your department has performed during the recent audit of its work health, safety and injury management system?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Whilst the department is a safe place to work, it is important we are never complacent when it comes to improving the standards of workplace safety. This department has a time injury frequency rate of 14.6 injuries per million hours worked, just to give you some idea, which compares very favourably to the average rate of 16.5 across the Public Service. Whilst this is 13 per cent lower, we do remain vigilant in preventing workplace injuries into the future. This is why the department, along with other agencies of the Crown, is required every three years to monitor and verify the implementation and evaluation of its work health, safety and injury management system. This provides assurance that systems are performing at an appropriate standard.

Public Sector Workforce Relations in DPC have been tasked with developing and implementing an audit process for crown agencies. Deloitte was subsequently selected to undertake

the evaluation of all crown agencies and commenced evaluation in May. The final report was completed on 30 June, so very recently. The process involved a detailed walk-through of WHS and injury management systems, examination of applicable policies, procedures, interviews with the chief executive and other executives, as well as site visits to verify processes on the ground. It used a four-point scale of poor, fair, adequate and strong, and I am pleased to advise that the department obtained the highest possible rating of strong for its injury management systems. I am told DECD is the only agency in government to achieve this rating.

The work health and safety systems achieved a fair rating with numerous positive observations recorded, and I am advised that overall DECD has performed well with no critical findings. To further enhance the workplace safety of the department, we must first know where there is room for improvement. This is the reason we have the audits and I welcome the findings. This has led to a number of recommendations for improvement in areas relating to WHS risk management, hazard reporting, plant and machinery safety, site-based WHS auditing, and communication.

My department will address these recommendations as part of its plan for continuous improvement. A \$1.8 million system-wide health and safety improvement program aimed at achieving legislative compliance across the department by December 2014 is now in place. This program will also be a primary vehicle for implementation of the audit recommendations. I thank the member for Colton for that question.

Mr BELL: Supplementary, sir.

The CHAIR: You are testing my patience, member for Mount Gambier, but yes, a supplementary. As a new member, I will let you go.

Mr BELL: Minister, those ratings sound very good. Does the rating include stress-related injuries?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It looks across all aspects of those areas: workplace claims, injury claims, prevention systems—all of those.

The CHAIR: Any other questions from opposition members?

Mr PISONI: On the same budget line, minister, back on 23 March last year, Keith Bartley—remember him?—the hand-picked executive of—

The CHAIR: Was that the question, member for Unley?

Mr PISONI: No, it wasn't the question.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, it was a tongue-in-cheek joke again. Another one of his tongue-in-cheeks.

The CHAIR: A tongue-in-cheek joke—carry on.

Mr PISONI: We all remember him—hand-picked by the Premier. He wrote to WorkCover requesting extension of the review period for the Department for Education and Child Development in regard to noncompliance with the Work Health and Safety Injury Management System. Could you advise the house as to when the department first became noncompliant with the WorkCover audit and whether it is actually now compliant with WorkCover?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I have just advised the house of the extensive process that we have gone through, the audit that we have undertaken and the areas that have been highlighted for improvement and the areas in which the department has done very well.

Mr PISONI: My question was: are you now compliant with WorkCover?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: What we do have is a report that has identified areas for improvement and we are in the process of dealing with those.

Mr PISONI: Mr Bartley wrote—

The CHAIR: Member for Unley, is this another question, then? Are you moving on?

Mr PISONI: This is supplementary to my previous question.

The CHAIR: Has the minister answered the question or would she like to continue?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: DPC is now responsible for the audits, so I have answered that question.

Mr PISONI: Well, you have not. Are you compliant with WorkCover? WorkCover is responsible for making sure that you are compliant.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The audit has been undertaken now. The responsibility for the audit is now through DPC.

The CHAIR: The minister has answered the question. Would you like to move on to another question, member for Unley?

Mr PISONI: Can you explain how many annual fees of \$18,000 the department had to pay WorkCover while it was going through the review period?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Sorry, I missed your question.

Mr PISONI: Can you advise the committee of how many annual payments of \$18,000 or more the department had to pay WorkCover while it was going through its review period?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I will take that question on notice, but I will stress again, there were no critical findings in the audit that was undertaken by Deloitte on behalf of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

Mr PISONI: In Mr Bartley's letter he said that the department would work with WorkCover SA evaluators to develop a partnership plan which includes review meetings and processes against the DECD action plan and that plan would be ready for 22 March 2013. When was WorkCover no longer involved in your compliance and audit process?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: When that correspondence was sent we were working directly with WorkCover across areas of improvement and we did so, I am advised, during 2013, but there was a decision in 2013 that the Department of the Premier and Cabinet would take over that audit process and they are outcomes that I have outlined in my previous—

Mr PISONI: Was that gazetted anywhere or was that advised?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: As I understand it, it was a cabinet decision that that would occur.

Mr GEE: My question to the minister is: 2014-15, Agency Statements, Volume 2, page 20, School Education, total expenses. Can the minister give details to the committee on the Post-Occupancy Evaluation for the Public Private Partnership New Schools in Adelaide glowing report?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I thank the member for Napier for his question and it would be of obvious interest to him as some of these schools are in his electorate and there are many children going to those. I am sure he would be pleased to learn what this independent evaluation says about those schools servicing his electorate.

Back in 2006 the government announced the delivery of six new schools through its Education Works initiative. Over time these six new schools received the collective title of super schools. Now that we understand the impact they have had on their community, I think it can be argued that this is arguably a fair title. Twenty schools and preschools were consolidated into new schools that became Mark Oliphant College, Roma Mitchell Secondary School, the Blair Athol School, Woodville Gardens School, John Hartley School and the Adelaide West Special Education Centre.

The aim of the project was not simply to provide new bricks and mortar or save money but to build whole new school communities from the ground up. This was a huge learning exercise not only for parents and students but also leadership teams across government. Whilst the public-private partnership model has been used in places like the United Kingdom, this was a whole new beginning for South Australia, and I am pleased to advise that the end results have shown that retention rates and NAPLAN results have improved, along with student behaviour.

As part of a thorough evaluation, the evaluation considered data analysis, site visits and interviews with principals, school and department staff, students, and members of local communities. The report, which had specific case studies at three schools, concludes they have paved strong foundations for each student to reach their potential having addressed community and student concerns about behaviour and safety.

Of course we do not commission reports simply to tell us what we want to hear, never mind how pleasing that is. This was a whole new experience and it is vital that we learn how we can do things even better next time. The planning process, recruitment process, input from staff, students and communities are just some examples of how the process could be improved if we were to consider more public-private partnership schools in the future.

That said, I believe this report shows how well this model can work and I note that New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland have built PPP schools and Western Australia is currently considering this option. I imagine the conservative government in Perth will be interested to hear that the evidence collated identified: that preschools have shown a significant increase in enrolments, with a steady growth rate of 15 per cent, and attendance rates averaging at or above the state average; an increase in the number of students completing SACE; and that for the first time the focus is on curriculum rather than behavioural management.

Most importantly, it would appear that students want to come to school and are proud of their school buildings and resources. The fact that additional classrooms were built at John Hartley School and Mark Oliphant College shows that locals have voted with their feet.

Interestingly, the independent report also mentioned the negativity towards the project at the time. That is no surprise; we see positive initiatives consistently being bagged in this state, never mind what you try to do. However, I have to say that I was really moved on a visit to one of the schools up there one day. I remarked on how beautiful the children looked; they were all in school uniform and really proud of their school. The principal said to me that she was brought to tears one morning when a mother walked past: her little girl was fully decked out in her beautiful new uniform, with her school bag and school hat and everything, but when the mum walked past she had holes in the bottom of her trousers (not a fashion statement, I might add). She had put every effort into making sure that her little girl went to her wonderful new school proud and with her head held high.

Mr HUGHES: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 23, Highlights, and Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum. Can the minister provide details about the Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Thank you, member for Giles; this is important. I recently had the opportunity to again meet with Bruce and Denise Morcombe, the parents of Daniel Morcombe, who was tragically abducted and murdered in Queensland in 2003. What an amazing couple to overcome that dreadful tragedy that I think no parent could even bear to think about, for them to overcome that and turn their grief into the promotion of child protection. They have been unwavering, and it has been a real honour to meet and talk with them about a wide range of initiatives.

I have spoken to them about what South Australia has in place, including the Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum, which has recently been reviewed and updated again. The Morcombes said that South Australia's curriculum is by far the nation's most comprehensive. This is a really glowing endorsement from the couple, who have visited every state and jurisdiction in the country to create a greater awareness about children's safety.

The Keeping Safe Curriculum is a guide for teachers so that they can teach children about recognising abuse, telling a trusted adult, and ways of keeping themselves safe. The Principals Australia Institute partnered with the Department for Education and Child Development to lead the review, which also included input from an expert advisory group, including Professor Emeritus Freda Briggs. The review has ensured that South Australia's curriculum continues to be world-class, and it reflects contemporary issues such as cyber bullying and sexting as well as managing relationships on social media and being online generally. We know that child protection issues have changed over time, so it is important that we adapt the school curriculum to keep up with these changes and reflect contemporary concerns.

The curriculum aims to help children and young people from preschool to senior secondary school learn to recognise abuse and develop ways to protect themselves. A number of actions have been implemented to address monitoring of the Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum implementation.

A Screening Audits For Educators (SAFE) team has been introduced and is conducting visits to schools and preschools to determine that the appropriate procedures are being followed in relation to child protection practices. This includes sites being required to provide evidence of compliance with training in the child protection curriculum.

The department's improvement and accountability framework is being reviewed in 2014 and it is envisaged that the child protection curriculum will be included as part of a compliance requirement. Discussions are also currently occurring with the South Australian Teacher Education Taskforce for the curriculum to be included as part of teaching courses for pre-service teachers and, during 2014-15, the Department for Education and Child Development will be exploring the feasibility of combining the responding to abuse and neglect training with the child protection curriculum training. As responding to abuse and neglect training is a DECD employment requirement, it is anticipated that the child protection curriculum will also become a requirement for employment.

Mr PISONI: Just a quick supplementary: when were the screening audits introduced, minister?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Are you talking about the SAFE team?

Mr PISONI: Yes. You referred to screening audits in schools now.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes.

Mr PISONI: I am just asking when the first screening audit was introduced.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: They have been operational this year. I will just see whether I can get the exact dates for you. We committed \$560,000 in this budget. We have auditors going out to all of our educational site services. In February the auditors commenced working to establish the SAFE team's work plan. All schools and preschools were advised via a circular in February. Pilots of a number of sites have been undertaken to identify issues for sites or the SAFE team so that a clear process could be established. A further circular, as I understand it, was sent to schools and preschools at the start of term 2 in preparation for the audit process, and the process is now underway. I think the completed audit process commenced this month.

Mr PISONI: Have any schools been audited to date?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes.

Mr PISONI: They have?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes.

Mr HUGHES: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 30, Total expenses. Can the minister confirm that Gonski money has been used to fund bureaucrats? If this is not correct, what is the department doing to improve services for students with disabilities in mainstream schools?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I note the member for Giles is disappointed about the money that we are now not going to get as part of the Gonski agreement, the Better Schools funding agreement. The commonwealth has reneged on its promise, and I think I referred back to signs, Liberal Party A-frames proclaiming they would match Labor's school funding dollar for dollar. So, there is a great deal of reason for people to be angry, but in relation—

Mr BELL: Point of order. Minister, what budget line does that refer to?

The CHAIR: Member for Giles, can you remind us of the budget line, please?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Total expenses.

Mr HUGHES: Total expenses—Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 30.

The CHAIR: Minister.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Regarding the first part of the question asking me whether I am using the Gonski money, money for our schools, to fund bureaucrats, I assume the member is referring to a media release issued by the member for Unley in January claiming that \$2.8 million of Better Schools funding would be used for more project officers or bureaucrats.

I am pleased you asked me this question because, let me be clear, that could not be any further from the truth. I can confirm that \$2.8 million of this Gonski money is being used to fund 20 extra disability coordinators. These additional positions will work with children, parents and school staff to give children with a disability the best possible educational opportunities in mainstream schools. These positions will have a focus on the needs of children with autism, but will include children with other disabilities as well. They will be members of a multidisciplinary team, providing a broad range of professional, direct and consultative services at the individual group, whole site and partnership level.

They will operate within our integrated support services program, which I understand from statements made by a previous opposition leader in January of last year aligns to the opposition's definition of a bureaucrat. It was stated then that South Australia should run its education system with the same student to public servant ratio as Victoria. If this was applied at the time of the statement it would have reduced the 1,748 FTEs by 888, leaving 860 staff to support our education system. What is missed by the opposition is that these staff include members from the department's integrated support service who provide an invaluable role in supporting students with disabilities. Services like psychologists and speech pathology would all be under threat if their definition of a bureaucrat was applied.

At the moment, considerable work is underway on the integrated support services project, which will, for the first time since the late 1990s, address how these services are delivered in mainstream schools. As cohorts of students with disabilities change, it is necessary to deliver services to where they are needed the most and also take advantage of the new partnership model. The draft workforce plan shows a reduction of 3.7 FTEs, from 285.7 down to 282, but then is bolstered by an extra 20 disability coordinator positions, creating a net increase of 16.3 full-time equivalent staff. On 11 July, a revised overview of current and proposed future positions was distributed for consultation. The new workforce will be in place in 2015, with the new model integrated over 12 months to allow staff to trial and finetune service delivery.

This brings me to another aspect of concern mentioned by the member for Unley as recently as this month when he said that schools are forced to use department staff when needing specialist support services. Meeting the broad range of needs for our students will always require flexibility and in some cases local solutions. Principals will continue to access specific supports for their students when required. However, schools have in place the autonomy to use their very innovative and tailored solutions. Examples of this include doctors and psychologists on campus at Victor Harbor and Roxby Downs, nurses contracted to work with a school in the northern suburbs, Families SA social workers in schools in the north, Bowden Brompton Community School provides antenatal services, Christies Beach and Wirreanda high schools using other agencies such as Second Story Youth Health Service and Anglicare and Autism SA contracted to work with schools in the south.

The CHAIR: Thank you, minister. Does anyone on my left have a question?

Mr PISONI: This refers to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, employee expenses, etc.

The CHAIR: Which page?

Mr PISONI: Page 20. The appointment of education directors and positions in the Review and Accountability Unit. A memo went out from Mr Harrison on 27 November naming only 19 education directors. However, I understand that there are now 20. Could the minister advise why all 20 were not named and was there any appeal or industrial issue that the department was dealing with that delayed the appointment of the 20th education director?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes.

Mr PISONI: Could you give details to the committee?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I will let Mr Harrison explain that, but ensuring that we maintain confidentiality around this person because I do not think they deserve to have their personal details publicly released.

Mr HARRISON: At the time we were processing, through a selection process, the filling of 20 new education director positions, which was a move from the regional directors model. We moved from a total of 31 positions, including regional directors and assistant regional directors, down to 20 education directors, and those 20 directors were very much designed to take lead responsibility across the 60 partnerships, and hence the 900 sites, to provide that hierarchical management and focus in relation to improving performance.

I was provided with a selection report in relation to 20. At the time I was also in the process of advancing some internal disciplinary conduct matters, and purely from an administrative process perspective I certainly erred on the side of caution to hold over confirmation of one of those selection processes until I was absolutely satisfied that the administrative process had been adequately exhausted. It was not until a short time later, from memory around November last year (or possibly the beginning of December), that that process was completed, and I was able to then confirm the appointment, which totalled the 20.

Mr PISONI: Did Mr Harrison raise concerns about the appointment of the 20th education director to you?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: He certainly briefed me on the process.

Mr PISONI: Were they concerns?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: He briefed me on the process he was going through.

Mr PISONI: Did he raise concerns about the appointment of that person?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: He detailed the process he was going through and why he was going through it.

Mr PISONI: The other process here was the review and accountability unit. It was announced that five members of that review and accountability unit were named in Mr Harrison's memo on 27 November. Yet I note that the review and improvement accountability director is still as a 'TBC' on the DECD organisational chart for the head of schools that was pulled off the website just yesterday. I believe that position has just recently been filled. Can you confirm that is the case, and what has the committee been doing since they were appointed in December 2013?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am advised that there were multiple processes underway at the time and, whilst going through that, we had the appointment of Ms Johnston, so the process was delayed so that we could develop a process of ensuring we had high performance accountability throughout the department and made sure we had the right framework. A new process was put in place, and I am advised that a new appointment has just recently been made of a very high-performing principal.

Mr PISONI: The second part of my question: what has the committee been doing? Have they made any reviews since being established in November last year, and what salary level are they on?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The salary levels of the people in that agency I obviously will have to take on notice. There have been and there are ongoing audit processes within our schools, but what we have in place now and will be embarking on is performance accountability in relation to education outcomes in our schools. The strategic plan that I launched today outlines our priorities, our objectives and how we expect to get there. It outlines the recognition of high levels of local autonomy, but along with that will come high levels of accountability and responsibility. That will be part of that high performance assessment, focused very strongly on educational outcomes for students in those local schools and in those local partnerships.

The Hon. P. CAICA: My question refers to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 12, under and below the heading of Objective. Can you advise the committee whether the Department for Education

and Child Development appropriately balances the educational needs of children with their safety at school?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I thank the member for Colton for that important question. I mentioned briefly in my response to the member for Unley that we have just released the Department for Education and Child Development's strategic plan. The strategy identifies six important priority areas: learning and achievement; health and wellbeing—

Mr PISONI: Point of order. The minister has already referred to the strategic plan on several occasions. I put to you that this is repetition.

The CHAIR: She is answering the member for Colton's question. I will listen with interest.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: He asked me whether we are balancing education needs with safety at school. That is the question I am answering. The strategy includes learning and achievement; health and wellbeing; child safety; and levels of engagement. We know how vital it is that parents are engaged with a child's learning. Those children who have parents who are actively engaged in the child's school have measurably better outcomes. We know that parents are the greatest determiner of occupations that students will undertake post school, so it is really important that we engage with families. The other priority area is access to services and also our overall systems.

The strategy's main goal is greater efficiency and effectiveness in the education and child protection system. The department has worked tirelessly to put in place a range of measures to ensure that children are safe in their environments and in our care, and that in the case that something goes wrong their parents are notified as soon as possible. These improvements have been undertaken in the face of constant attack, I might add.

The state government has, to name a few recent initiatives, released in relation to education the numeracy and literacy strategy and the Aboriginal education strategy and announced specialisations at various high schools. It is interesting that we have not heard a single policy come from the opposition that would help improve academic results for students. We have had nothing but criticism about the actions of our teachers and achievements of our students.

Mr PISONI: Point of order. That is simply a statement that is not factually correct. I ask for it to be withdrawn.

The CHAIR: What is your point of order?

Mr PISONI: That it is not a factually correct statement and I ask for it to be withdrawn.

The CHAIR: What is the point of order? Which number?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: What is not correct?

The CHAIR: What is the point of order? Which number? I need to check. Are you suggesting the minister is misleading the house?

Mr PISONI: No, the member for Croydon, as the Speaker, made it very clear at the last sitting of the full parliament that members must stand by the comments that they make in the parliament.

The CHAIR: On matters of substance. On matters of 'sufficient moment' I think were the Speaker's words. I do not think this is a 'sufficient moment' and I do not think it is a point of order and I think the minister can continue her answer.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Thank you, sir. We have been criticised and the department has consistently been attacked while it has worked incredibly diligently to get appropriate policies and processes in place and, at the same time, worked really hard at the main game which is getting our kids a great education. To have criticism from the person who has launched these attacks and who has then come out and said that we have taken our eye off the education ball just really defies any sense of logic, quite frankly.

Mr PISONI: Look at your testing results, look at your NAPLAN results.

The CHAIR: Order, member for Unley! Order!

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: All you have done is spent 12 months—

The CHAIR: Order! The minister should continue her answer.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: —attacking everyone in this department and you wonder why people are demoralised.

The CHAIR: Minister, have you finished your answer?

Mr PISONI: That is your management. You are the manager.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It is you.

The CHAIR: Order! Minister have you finished your answer?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I have, thank you.

The CHAIR: Member for Colton.

The Hon. P. CAICA: Minister, I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 24, specifically Targets 2014-15, dot point 4, school counsellors. Minister, can you advise the committee what action the government is taking to ensure all public school students have access to a school counsellor no matter what category of school they attend? I congratulate you, too. I think I know the answer.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I thank the member for Colton for his question.

Mr PISONI: The reason the member for Colton knows the answer is that it has been in the media and it is publicly available information. It has also been an answer to a question in the parliament previously.

The CHAIR: Hang on.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, it has not.

Mr PISONI: It has.

The Hon. P. CAICA: I have to say I heard it from my schools, some of the schools in the lower category and even in the higher category schools.

Mr PISONI: This information is publicly available.

The CHAIR: To be fair, member for Unley, we have not heard the information yet. All we have heard is the question.

Mr PISONI: We do not need to hear the answer. The question is about school counsellors and it is information that is publicly available. The member for Croydon has already made it clear as the Speaker that if information is already publicly available then it is out of order to refer to it in asking a question.

The CHAIR: We cannot say that on the basis of a question. We have to listen to the answer before we decide what is in the public domain and what is not, and what is a relevant answer to the member for Colton's question.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Thank you chair, and I can probably point out that most of what the member for Unley asks is in the public domain as well, so that would knock out 90 per cent of his questions. That will be interesting. We have a number of schools in the member for Unley's electorate like Parkside Primary School. I am not sure of their category but as part of this initiative they will get access to a school counsellor. Sadly, however, they will lose something like \$429,000 in just two years because the member for Unley continues to stand up for his mate Christopher Pyne in ripping money out of our schools. Glen Osmond Primary School—I am sure they will appreciate getting access to a school counsellor—is going to lose something like \$456,000 because the member for Unley stands up for the actions of his mate, Christopher Pyne.

What I am pointing out to the committee is that, historically, high schools get a school counsellor, but initially only category 1 to 3 schools received access to a primary school counsellor. That was increased to include category 4 and category 5 schools but, like the member for Unley, I

have some schools in my electorate that are category 7 schools, so they are considered to be the highest level of advantage as far as opportunity for children is concerned. There are a lot of factors that are taken into account in calculating the category in which a school sits.

I have always considered it to be quite an anomaly, because you can have a small school that reached the requirement to access a counsellor. I think the requirement is 40 per cent School Card holders. If you have a small school, you only need a small number of students, effectively, to get to that 40 per cent number, but you could have a category 7 school with below the 40 per cent in School Card holders but, in fact, has more students in the cohort of number.

We wanted to go some way in redressing that anomaly so we have provided \$14.2 million over four years to ensure that school counsellors will be available to every primary school student in the state by 2015-16. As I said, this includes category 7 schools, considered to be the least disadvantaged. The small primary schools (and this is, in the main, in rural areas, I would venture to say—there are some close to the city but they are few and far between) with 71 students or fewer will receive funding to access private counselling services should they wish to do so.

It is a great initiative that we are implementing. I am sure those primary schools in the member for Unley's electorate will be pleased to hear that we are supporting them with school counsellors but I know they will be disappointed to hear the member for Unley's support for ripping many hundreds of thousands of dollars from their school funding resources and support.

The CHAIR: Supplementary from the member for Mount Gambier.

Mr BELL: This might go against some of my colleagues, but I do commend the minister for that initiative. I think it is a good initiative. Could the minister confirm that the term 'school counsellor' will come with the appropriate qualifications? I say that because I have been a school counsellor and I have seen teachers appointed as a school counsellor with no formal training or qualification, so it is a genuine question.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Were you properly qualified?

Mr BELL: No, I was not.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: In the main, school counsellors are teachers, I think it is fair to say, but they do access professional learning. Historically, I think we introduced school counsellors, from my memory, into high schools more as guidance officers. As time has evolved, along with the complexities of our community and the needs of students, the demands on school counsellors have changed.

They access professional learning such as child and student wellbeing, youth mental health, first aid, strategies for managing abuse-related trauma, which is really important, particularly for children who are in the child protection system who have often gone through situations we do not even want to think about. Professional learning is provided through DECD and in conjunction with other key agencies such as CAMHS and the Australian Childhood Foundation.

They are further supported by specialist DECD support services, and that includes those people I was talking about before—social workers, educational psychologists and attendance counsellors.

Mr HUGHES: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 30, line 8, Expenses. Can the minister advise the house on plans to review the school transport policy?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The member for Giles has been quite a strong advocate on behalf of many students in his electorate who receive assistance under this transport policy. When we came into government in 2002, South Australia's school buses were in a very sorry state. Only four school buses at that time had seatbelts. There are now more than 470 school bus services operating across South Australia, catering for about 16,000 students on a daily basis. It is anticipated that by the end of 2016 all of these services will have seatbelts and air conditioning.

The last time the school transport policy was reviewed was in 2006 and the state government wants to ensure that we provide help to as many students as possible with the resources that are available to us. The existing policy has served South Australia well and has been supported by both Liberal and Labor governments since 1985. The review will seek feedback from parents and

students, schools, governing councils, principal associations and the education union, as well as non-government schools, bus contractor associations and owner-operators.

Work will begin in mid-August with a report expected to be finalised midway through next year. It will look at a number of issues concerning school bus transport, including the perceived inequalities in bus services for regional students attending private schools. Despite assertions made by the member for Unley last year in *The Flinders News*, the existing policy treats students attending both government and private schools equally.

Let me just be really clear. Any student living five kilometres or more from their nearest government school is entitled to receive transportation to that school, whether they are eligible for primary school or high school. The review will look at how important these issues are in terms of what is working, community values and support, and what resources could be reconfigured to improve any of these services. I also want to acknowledge the member for Frome who has keenly advocated for this review to take place. He put a motion to the parliament to have the current policy reviewed to reflect the educational needs of children in regional areas across the state.

I have to also be clear that this will not lead to students being able to go to any school anywhere. That would just be impossible and unrealistic, but what we want to do is make sure that we have an appropriate policy that gets as many children as we can to the school they wish to attend. This issue came to light in a situation in and around Clare, where primary school students were accessing the school bus and going past the nearest public primary school and on to a private primary school in Clare, which was fine while there were vacancies on the bus, but that could not be sustained when an updated, smaller bus was provided, given that the children could go to the local primary school. However, public and private high school students who needed to go to Clare were using that bus.

The CHAIR: Supplementary, member for Schubert.

Mr KNOLL: Can the minister outline what budget savings were achieved by a reduction in capacity to exclude non-government school students as part of that bus contract?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It was not about a budget saving. It came to light as a result of a principal asking for a new, larger bus to accommodate all these students. Of course, there was a group of students who were not eligible to travel on that bus because they had a primary school that was within the five kilometre radius that they could access. A new bus was purchased to replace the old bus. The new bus has seatbelts and air conditioning, which the old bus did not have, so it was not about a budget saving. It was about adhering to the policy and providing a new bus with those safety measures in it.

Mr PISONI: I just want to take you back to the Review and Accountability Unit on page 20 of Budget Paper 4, Volume 2. Could you confirm when the review officers were appointed and whether they have been undertaking any of the work they were appointed to undertake? The description here in the chief executive's memo states:

The positions of Review Officer have been established to provide leadership and expertise in identifying and evaluating best practice in schools and preschools, and supporting sites through the continuous improvement process.

Could you detail what sites they have been supporting since they undertook those roles?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I could give you a quick simple answer, but I think it is probably better if Mr Harrison gives you a fulsome and detailed answer so you are very clear about what has been going on.

Mr HARRISON: The significantly new approach during 2014 is that we identify in advance a series of modules of professional development and enhancement which incorporates the 20 education directors, the 60 partnerships and around about 900 site leaders from preschools, primary schools and secondary schools. It is very much a formulated professional development improvement process and very much a focus that we think by targeting the 900 site leaders through the education directors we can achieve the greatest level of attraction of improved educational attainment, wellbeing and outcomes right across all of our sites.

Two of those modules have been completed so far in term 1 and term 2 and there is another one programmed for terms 3 and 4. The modules can be between one and three days, where all of those relevant leaders come together at locations across the state in group environments for group learning and also professional development, but it is very much focused on school enhancement and educational attainment outcome.

Also during 2014, through the new structure of a senior executive group within the department, there is a mandated requirement that representatives of the senior executive group also attend these modules of professional development and high performance outcome focus to ensure that we have a very close relationship between policy and program development at a senior executive level, but also bringing together through the education directors and all 900 site leaders a very united committed focus on what we have been talking about, which is educational attainment, improvement and professional development.

We are continuing to advance a more heightened focus of educational attainment and a high performing organisation. We see 2014 as a transitional year as we head towards 2015 and as we move full on into the partnership structural arrangement as well as supported by policies. I can say very clearly that the new model through the office of education is not about being super principals and going in and assisting principals in times of need; it is about working with principal site leaders through partnerships to very much structure business improvement plans which must be aligned to senior executive policy and planning development processes and ensuring that there is that absolute clarity in relation to performance expectations on a business planning process approach.

Mr PISONI: Have they reviewed any schools?

Mr HARRISON: When you talk about reviewing schools I would ask maybe for a bit of clarity if that is the case, but if it is about going physically into a school environment and doing an audit process, that has not happened in 2014. Very much the focus endorsed by myself, as the chief executive, is about ensuring that we have 900 site leaders acutely aware of what the organisational expectations are about performance and driving that through the partnership structure led by the 20 educational directors, including the senior executive group members in that particular process, during 2014.

In 2015 we will certainly see the review teams actually physically going into the school environments and by that time I would like to hope through improved data management processes that we will be able to get early indicators as to when schools are not meeting the performance expectations that I would be expecting right across those 900 sites. There are multiple system improvements occurring at the moment which will actually assist us focusing those review teams going into the schools which we do not believe are necessarily meeting their performance indicators.

Mr PISONI: I would take you to page 20 of the same budget paper, homestay accreditation. Are you aware of a regional school that hosted students from interstate prior to parents gaining accreditation for homestay?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Could you give me some more detail about that please? I am not sure where that—

Mr PISONI: I understand a regional school—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am sorry, what budget line are you talking about?

Mr PISONI: This is in Objectives, which is obviously about the role of parents and local communities in schools. When parents act as hosts for students from overseas or interstate there is a policy, which is available on the site—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes; there are strict requirements—

Mr PISONI: —which states that prospective homestay families must successfully complete the accreditation process before hosting students. I understand there was a regional school that applied for the accreditation in May, and in June—prior to accreditation being granted—20 or so students stayed with parents of that community.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: So, prior to the school getting accreditation or prior to parents undergoing screening checks?

Mr PISONI: Yes, apparently.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Apparently? You know this is fact?

Mr PISONI: This is what I have been advised, and I am using this opportunity to ask whether—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Is that fact? Okay. I will take that on notice—

Mr PISONI: —you are aware of it.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Thank you. I will take that question on notice and check the validity of your assertion. I cannot be aware of something that you are saying you are not fully aware of either. I am asking you whether you know that to be fact before you throw an assertion—

Mr PISONI: It has been put to me, minister.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Well, you are not allowed to have 'a little birdie told me' questions, remember?

Mr PISONI: It has been put to me that—

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: A little birdie told you?

Mr PISONI: You make your mind up what the rules are—

The CHAIR: Order! Member for Unley, if we are going to adhere strictly to the Speaker's rulings, 'a little birdie told me' is apparently a new rule.

Mr PISONI: Yes, but you do not apply them to me, Mr Chair.

The CHAIR: The minister has advised that she will look into it and get back to us with a response, so move onto the next question please, if you have one.

Mr PISONI: I want to take you to page 12, again Objectives—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Page 12?

Mr PISONI: —or page 20, I think it is, and harnessing collaborative relationships with school communities. I will take you to the judgement on the Rose Park Primary School. There has been an issue with Rose Park Primary School for quite a number of years regarding who is responsible for the employment of out-of-school-hours care staff, in particular. Recently the department handled a tender process for a non-government provider for that service but it was raised, in the finding, that there had been employees of the out-of-school-hours care service that had made underpayment of wages claims that had been dealt with by the Department for Education and Child Development, and that they were settled. Can you confirm that was the case, and also advise how many other schools are raising the same concerns and how many other claims there have been for underpayment of out-of-school-hours care directors or staff of schools in the DECD system?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The concern of the Rose Park Primary School governing council, as I understand it, is they lodged action in the Supreme Court seeking a determination as to whether the council or the department was the employing agency of the out-of-school-hours care staff. The department's view—and I understand that we maintain that view—is that they are employees of the governing council, not the department.

In coming to this position and having met with representatives of Rose Park Primary School governing council, and looking at, I suppose, the complexities of a governing council having that responsibility, I provided authorisation for governing councils to engage third-party providers so that they do not themselves have to be the employer in future.

I think that was a good outcome for the governing council. We have assured the governing council around issues of employment and that they are indemnified under the Education Act, but there are still matters that are before the court. As to the issues in relation to industrial matters, I will take those questions on notice.

The CHAIR: The member for Colton.

The Hon. P. CAICA: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 20, below the heading of School Education. Minister, can you provide details about the status of permanent teachers in temporary positions in schools, and when can schools advertise openly for ongoing teacher positions?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I thank the member for Colton for this question. As part of the annual teacher staffing cycle, principals, principal associations and the department have worked together to appoint around 300 permanent teachers in temporary positions—they are known as PATs—into ongoing positions for 2015. This is a significant milestone in the ongoing reform of teacher selection and recruitment and was supported by the key principal associations.

To ensure as many permanent positions as possible are advertised this year, HR consultants worked closely with schools to facilitate this year's PAT placement process. The origins of this reform hail back to June 2011 when a new teacher recruitment policy was implemented. The main features of this policy include providing principals in all schools with the capacity to recruit staff to best suit their school's circumstances and eliminate the requirement for teachers to move schools every 10 years.

The policy also provides greater opportunities for graduate and contract teachers to gain stable employment. In previous years, prior to the new policy, approximately 1,500 permanent against temporary positions were required to be placed each year. In the last few years the number to be placed has reduced significantly. For the first time since the new policy was introduced, all PATs have now been placed into ongoing positions for 2015. This gives schools the opportunity to advertise any further ongoing teacher positions and allows them to select the most suitable teacher to meet their needs. This gives schools the autonomy they need whilst not embracing the opposition's ill-conceived staffing designs based around the concepts of natural selection.

To date we have had 152 ongoing teacher advertisements for 2015 for country and Index of Educational Disadvantage category 1 and 2 schools. Metropolitan schools are now in a position to advertise any further ongoing teaching vacancies as of today—maybe not today, maybe next week. I might have been wrong with that. Anyway, I am told that approximately 400 ongoing teacher vacancies will be advertised and, for the first time, this centrally-managed process has concluded before the end of term 2. This will assist in providing staffing stability at the start of the 2015 school year, and I congratulate all those involved for all of their hard work in bringing this position about.

The Hon. P. CAICA: My next question refers to the same Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 20, under employee benefit expenses. Minister, can you advise the committee whether principals are bound to follow the advice of their personal advisory committees or PACs?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Thank you. I know this is a question that is often raised in the media. Can I be really clear that the ultimate responsibility for decision-making in schools rests with the principal under the Education Act and Regulation 42. This states that the principal is answerable to the chief executive through the education director and teachers are answerable to the principal.

Clause 3.5.2 of the South Australian School and Preschool Education Staff Enterprise Agreement states that the principal has the delegated responsibility for human resource decisions at the school level. This is on condition that these decisions are made in accordance with the consultation process outlined in the 2012 enterprise agreement.

Clause 3.5.9 of the 2012 enterprise agreement outlines the issues that the principal will, in all cases, except where it is not practicable because of the nature or urgency of the matter, work in partnership with the PAC at the school. These include those affecting human resources in the school, such as the deployment of staff appointed to the school, the development of leadership structures within the school, identification of vacancies in the school, the organisation of work and concerns regarding excessive workload from individual staff.

Clause 3.5.12 outlines what is expected by the term 'working in partnership' when human resource management decisions are made at the school. It is a three-step process, and it states:

It is expected that decisions will be arrived at by consensus. If this is not able to be achieved then it can be made by a majority of the PAC, whereby the majority must include the principal. If this is not able to be achieved then

the principal can make the decision as the responsible person, but the 2012 enterprise agreement does allow other PAC members to lodge a grievance with the executive director of human resources if they are dissatisfied with the principal's decision.

PAC training is jointly run by DECD and the AEU for PAC members and the PAC Handbook provides that staff cannot be on the PAC unless they have participated or agree to participate at the earliest opportunity in the training. This training makes it clear that the PAC is a consultative body and that, although the principal must work in partnership with the PAC, they have the delegated responsibility for making human resource decisions in their school.

Information regarding the role of the PAC has been provided in writing to SAPPA and SASSLA in response to requests. It is the understanding of my department that this information has been distributed to members of these bodies. Any concerns regarding the function of a PAC by a principal can be raised with the relevant senior human resources consultant. These issues can be elevated to the Director, Workforce Management if it is required.

Mr PISONI: I have a supplementary on that, sir.

The CHAIR: Yes, a quick supplementary from the member for Unley.

Mr PISONI: Minister, are you able to advise who provides the training for the PAC, what the cost of the training is and who pays, and what are the consequences for a principal who refuses to attend the training?

The CHAIR: That seemed to be an omnibus of supplementaries, member for Unley.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: As I understand it, the PAC is jointly run by the department; it is joint departmental and AEU training.

Mr PISONI: Sorry?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It is a shared responsibility, as I told you.

Mr PISONI: What is the cost and who pays for it?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The cost is people in the department, so they are all attending as part of their roles and responsibilities, there is no additional cost to anyone.

Mr PISONI: Well, who pays the union to—

The CHAIR: Hang on a minute.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: If you are asking do we pay the union, we do not.

The CHAIR: The member for Colton I think has another question. I beg your pardon, the member for Napier.

Mr GEE: Thank you, sir. I refer to Budget Paper 6, Part 2, page 37. Can the minister update the committee on the progress surrounding Adelaide's second CBD high school?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I thank the member for Napier for his question. Prior to the state election the state government announced it will build a new secondary school for 1,000 students on the grounds of the Royal Adelaide Hospital following its relocation in 2016. Before I receive a predictable supplementary, I have not been advised of any delays to construction of the new hospital.

The state government committed \$85 million over five years to fund this project, with the scheduled opening of the new school in 2019. As any member capable of reading the budget will know, Budget Paper 6, Volume 2, page 37 is the green light we have all been waiting to receive for this exciting project. Sadly, not all members are capable of understanding the budget papers, it would seem.

The next stage we will be undertaking is a master planning exercise to determine the location and costs for the school on the RAH site. It is anticipated to be completed by the end of this year. The second city high school will relieve current enrolment pressures affecting schools in the CBD and surrounding areas. In future years there would be scope to allow for expansion of the school if needed, whereas expansion options would be severely limited had we decided to expand Adelaide High School to a colossal 2,450 students on both sides of West Terrace.

From 2019, students from Bowden, Brompton, the section of Clarence Gardens zoned to Black Forest Primary, Hindmarsh, Hilton, Kurralta Park, Glandore, Black Forest, Nailsworth, Medindie, Medindie Gardens, Gilberton, Walkerville and Collinswood will be in an expanded city school zone. The eastern sides of Torrensville, Mile End, Richmond and Marleston will also be incorporated. This, of course, is in contrast to the opposition's policy document, which did not include students from Thorngate, Collinswood, Medindie, Medindie Gardens and Nailsworth. With year 7 to also be crammed into their planned school, it makes me wonder whether this was a misprint or a deliberate omission.

An advisory body consisting of representatives from Adelaide High and affected feeder primary schools will help set enrolment policies for the new high school. It is an exciting project, and I am delighted it has bipartisan support and I thank the generous comments from the member for Adelaide. Whilst it may be a bit of a stretch on her website claiming that the project was her idea, I do note her comments in *The Australian* from October last year saying the RAH site will be an ideal location for a second city school, and we most certainly agree with her.

Mr PISONI: I remind you, sir, that part of my supplementary previously was: are there consequences for principals who refuse to attend training for the PAC? I think the minister must not have not got to that part of the question. Could she clarify that?

The CHAIR: I do not understand the question: are you asking me to clarify something?

Mr PISONI: I am repeating the question I asked previously as part of my supplementary, because there was no answer forthcoming.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am advised that it has never actually come up to be dealt with. All principals have attended the PAC training, as you would expect. Do you have any idea of some who are going to resist?

Mr PISONI: So, you are standing by the fact that all principals have attended their PAC training? Are you standing by that?

The Hon. P. Caica interjecting:

Mr PISONI: I am asking her whether she is standing by that.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am saying that the matter has never been raised to be dealt with.

Mr PISONI: So now you are backing away from it?

The CHAIR: No, no.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No. You are so rude! Why do you have to be so rude?

The CHAIR: Does the member for Unley have a question?

Mr PISONI: I do have a question.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Is it your mate down south you are referring to? Is that what you are referring to? Recalcitrant! We will deal with it appropriately.

Mr PISONI: Just on the matter we were speaking about earlier on Rose Park.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Is this a new question?

Mr BELL: Chair, I think it is incumbent on—

Mr PISONI: You are so rude, minister! You are so rude! You are a disgrace!

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am asking you: is it a new question?

The CHAIR: Order, minister!

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Is it a new question? Are you still on principals or are you on Rose Park now? Is it a new question?

The CHAIR: Minister, please! Order!

Mr PISONI: This goes to—

The CHAIR: Member for Unley, order!

Mr PISONI: I thought you were calling me, sir, I beg your pardon.

The CHAIR: No, I was calling you to order. Do you have a question?

Mr PISONI: I do, sir; thank you very much.

The CHAIR: Is it a new question?

Mr PISONI: It is a new question.

The CHAIR: Excellent; ask away.

Mr PISONI: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 12.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Is it 12 or 20?

Mr PISONI: They are similar, so you can choose. The Debelle inquiry recommendation No. 22 recommended that the department establish processes of mediation for the resolution of disputes between the department and governing councils. Can you advise then why the department forced the Rose Park governing council to actually use a court system in order to get a judgement on a matter?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We did not force them. They chose to do that.

Mr PISONI: What was the mediation process?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: They chose to do it. It was their choice.

Mr PISONI: Why did you try and knock it out?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We resolved an issue that allowed them to engage a private provider. It was their choice. We provided them with money to get funding to get independent legal advice, if I remember correctly. We provided them—

Mr PISONI: Was that money refused first?

The CHAIR: Member for Unley, order! Allow the minister to answer the question.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We provided them with funding to get independent legal advice, and I authorised the engagement of private providers, which means that the governing council is not the employer of that service. They have a private provider on site and they chose still to take the matter to court. They were not forced to do that; it was their choice.

The CHAIR: The member for Colton.

Mr PISONI: That was just one question, sir.

The CHAIR: I think you will find there was more than one question in that exchange.

Mr PISONI: It was a line of questioning. It is very unorthodox, I have to say.

The CHAIR: The member for Colton has a question.

The Hon. P. CAICA: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 24, under Highlights, specifically dot point 5, school-based apprenticeships. Can you provide to the committee details about how many students are undertaking retail training in DECD schools?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The member is probably referring to 'SDAgate', but never mind. At the end of last year, we reached a significant milestone. There were 5,000 high school students signed up to undertake an apprenticeship while still at school. That is a huge achievement for the state government and its trade schools for the future program. There are now more than 5,500 commencements.

The program enables high school students to combine their South Australian Certificate of Education studies with vocational and education training in the form of a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship—and I think that is where your question has come from. Students can study, work and undertake training in the same timetable, something that is encouraging students to stay at school longer. Schools determine if there is a need in a particular area and offer programs accordingly.

Retail skills are an important skill set, as they are transferable to many other occupations. However, as we have seen in recent times—and I did refer briefly to 'SDAgate'—the member for Unley made some alarming allegations that high school students were being pushed into retail training by the government in order to boost membership of the Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees' Association.

His claims, whether he meant them to or not, clearly implied the education sector is corrupt. Suggesting educators are recruiters for the SDA is desperation beyond belief, and the member for Unley obviously realised this. He retracted his allegations the next day, claiming they were tongue in cheek (more like foot in mouth). The member for Unley thinks this is some grand conspiracy where the Labor government is really an SDA recruiter. I have never been known for that and I am sure you can attest to that, member for Colton.

Mr PISONI: Perhaps you should ask the member for Light.

Mr KNOLL: That is right. You got your faction allegiances mixed up.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, well, none of us do that, but you know, we are going to hear that Elvis is still alive and that chem trails are causing global warming, and he probably thinks the moon is hollow and filled with evil lizards. I am surprised he did not swing his support behind a former member in this actual chamber who wanted to have fluoride removed from water because it is a form of mind control.

The CHAIR: Minister have you completed your answer?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No.

The CHAIR: No? Carry on.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We have 545 students in DECD schools who have commenced a retail services VET certificate in 2013, and that is a bit less than 6 per cent of our overall student enrolments in VET; 172 enrolled at certificate III; 346 at certificate II; and 27 at certificate I. It was interesting that, when these claims were made, the Australian Retailers Association executive director, Russell Zimmerman, said the Australian Workforce and Productivity Agency was predicting 110,000 new retail jobs across the country over the next five years and that retail sales, contrary to what was asserted, in South Australia rose 0.1 per cent in April.

The CHAIR: Supplementary, member for Unley.

Mr PISONI: Minister, you claimed in parliament that I had put out a release claiming that the department was a recruiter for the shoppies union. Do you stand by those comments?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Thank you for that question.

The CHAIR: Member for Unley, what budget line are you referring to?

Mr PISONI: This is a supplementary question.

The CHAIR: The minister can answer if she wishes.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Thank you. I certainly was of the belief at the time that it was a media release but in searching his site we found no such release.

Mr PISONI: So you misled parliament, did you? Is that what you did?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Of substance?

Mr PISONI: When are you going to correct it?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Of substance.

The CHAIR: I think 'of sufficient moment' is the phrase you are looking for.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I have just corrected it.

Mr Pisoni interjecting:

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Did you say it?

The CHAIR: I call the member for Giles.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Did you say it?

Mr HUGHES: I will just wait for them to finish.

Mr PISONI: We were laughing.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Sure you were. We watched the news and we saw it.

Mr HUGHES: I refer to Budget Paper 3, pages 60 and 64: Schools revenue. Can the minister advise whether the state government has increased school fees to pay for the federal government's Gonski shortfall?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Oh yes, another foot-in-mouth episode. Here we have South Australian schools facing \$335 million being ripped from them by Christopher Pyne and the federal government. This does not mean we have increased school fees to pay for this massive financial blow, and the suggestion that the state government had increased school fees to pay for our share of Gonski is appalling. It either shows deliberate misleading of the general population or complete ignorance about how school fees are structured and what happens with them.

Let me explain how it works. I think I explained this last year but just so that new members of this committee understand how the materials and services charge works, that is, the fee that parents are charged when their child goes to a public school, I will say it again. The materials and services charge was legislated in 2001 by the previous Liberal government and is collected by local schools for the local school. The revenue does not pass through central office nor does anyone other than the school have control over it. It is an example of school autonomy, which I understand is something that the member for Unley is very keen on.

The schools review budget line includes school fees, School Card and other school revenue. In 2013, the standard sum for a primary student was \$214 and \$284 for a student at high school. The standard sum for a primary school student in 2014 is \$219 and rises to \$290 for a student at high school. Let me be clear again: the base fee was legislated for and it has annual increases through the fees and services charge regulation.

If a school wants to charge more than that they have to go out and notify all the parents and have a ballot. Some schools do charge more than this but they have to conduct a ballot of parents at the school, so it is money from parents for that school, it does not come to the central agency and it certainly has not been used to backfill our commitment to Gonski. Each year, the standard indexation rate applies.

Last year, the member for Unley, if my memory serves me correctly, went out and said parents had to raise this money through sausage sizzles and quiz nights. I explained to the committee last year that this was nonsense and that budgetary adjustments are done by Treasury to reflect the latest income data in schools so that we have the complete data in our budget.

I am pleased the member asked me that question so that everyone can be really clear about how school fees are set and how some schools may have higher rates, but let's be really clear: none of that money is going towards the state government honouring its Gonski commitment while the federal government is ripping \$335 million from our schools.

The CHAIR: The member for Mount Gambier has a supplementary.

Mr BELL: In regard to the ballot that needs to be taken to increase school fees, is it 50 per cent or is it higher than that? Do more parents than that need to agree to that higher charge?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We think it is just a majority but we will clarify that and, when we get confirmation of that, I will let you know.

Mr GEE: Budget Paper 4, page 24. Can the minister advise on progress to changes to the Adelaide High School zone? Which suburbs will be included and when will the project to expand the school be completed?

Mr BELL: Point of order, sir.

The CHAIR: Yes, I suspect I know what your point of order might be.

Mr BELL: We have already gone over that ground and I am very clear on where the new zones are.

The CHAIR: I will listen carefully to the minister's answer.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: This is Adelaide High School, not the new—

The CHAIR: I think you are right. So I will let the minister answer.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The state government announced last year in its High-Quality Education policy document the zones for students attending Adelaide High School will be expanded. Beginning in 2015, students from Prospect, Ovingham, Fitzroy and Thorngate will be allowed to enrol at Adelaide High School. As I advised in last year's estimates, this is made possible by the construction of an additional classroom space which I am told will be completed this month or early next month. Full completion of the project will include work on refurbishing an existing building, and it is expected to be ready in 2015.

It is a major project and includes a new three-storey learning centre, including a resource centre, study areas, science labs, drama space, classrooms, outdoor social and learning areas, undercroft car parking, a three-storey extension to existing building 4 to accommodate six new general learning areas, refurbishment of existing art, general and learning areas, and refurbishment of the former canteen block to accommodate student services. Whilst we know an expanded Adelaide High School will be popular, analysis by the department indicates it will be able to accommodate the increased enrolments in an expanded zone from 2015. As Adelaide High's enrolment policies are gazetted, I intend tabling the revised documents in parliament shortly.

I understand that the member for Unley has made numerous statements claiming that the state government had broken its 2010 election commitments on enrolments. The exact wording of the media release from 2010 states:

The state's first free high school will be expanded to cater for up to 250 students from 2013.

Had the government adopted the Liberals' Year 7 into High School policy, students from Prospect, Ovingham, Fitzroy and Thorngate would have to wait much later than 2015 to be included in the Adelaide High School zone. In fact, it is questionable which suburbs would have been included, as their election policy document made no mention of students from Thorngate, Collinswood, Medindie, Medindie Gardens and Nailsworth being zoned to attend a city high school.

Mr PISONI: Point of order, sir—repetition. We heard this earlier in the debate. The minister is consuming the committee with lots of Dorothy Dixers and we do not need to hear them again.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Relevant questions.

The CHAIR: I will keep listening. Has the minister finished?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, thank you.

The CHAIR: In that case, the member for Unley has a question.

Mr PISONI: Referring to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 30—Expenses: Supplies and services. Is the minister aware of the South Australian Primary Principals Association utilities review that was circulated in September last year based on a return of principals of 74 schools about breakdown maintenance, electricity and gas, telephone and water charges? Claims were made that the average amount that schools are short in breakdown maintenance is about \$15,000 a year, and the highest shortfall was \$46,000 a year.

In regard to electricity and gas charges, 57 schools reported that they were short of funds. The average amount was \$13,730 and the highest amount was \$80,000. In regard to telephone

charges, 37 of those schools said they were short an average amount of \$2,198, with the highest amount being \$14,000. For water, 68 sites said they were short of funds, with the average amount being \$27,000. The highest amount was \$96,000, with the next highest being \$75,000 and \$68,500.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I accept that it is a matter of some tension for some schools in relation to the cost of utilities. We are working with both the associations to ensure that we have a fair and equitable allocation of all utility funding. I will point out—and I am sure it is of interest to new members, who may not understand—that schools have what is called a SASIF account. We provide them with their budgets for utilities, etc. They collect their school fees, and these schools currently have collectively in their bank accounts in excess of \$385 million. Some \$385 million worth of funding that we have provided to schools for education of children now is being held in those accounts, so I would be interested to know whether you could give me an example of which schools you are talking about so we could check what is in their SASIF accounts.

Mr PISONI: I suggest you contact the South Australian Primary Principals Association.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: You were just reading from a brief—fine.

Mr PISONI: It was their document. I explained that.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We are working with them.

Mr PISONI: If you were listening, you would have heard me explain that at the start of my question.

The CHAIR: Has the minister finished her answer?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, thank you.

The CHAIR: Excellent. A new question from the member for Unley.

Mr PISONI: I refer to Budget Paper 6: Budget Measures Statement—Investing program, concerning the new city high school.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: What page are you referring to?

Mr PISONI: This is page 39, minister. There is an amount of \$30,420,000 in 2016-17 and \$23,845,000 the following year, and this measure represents a reallocation of investing expenditure in the 2016-17 and 2017-18 budgets. Could you detail to the committee where that reallocation has come from? In other words, what projects were either deferred or cancelled to provide that funding for the city high school?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No projects were deferred or cancelled. This is the bringing forward of unallocated capital funding.

Mr PISONI: The description in the paper is a reallocation. The budget papers say a reallocation.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, of unallocated funding. We have a capital budget and it is funds that had not been allocated to a project.

Mr PISONI: In the 2017-18 year are there a higher number of requests for capital expenditure that have been refused based on this reallocation?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We have not allocated the 2017-18 budget yet.

Mr PISONI: How can it be a reallocation then? The papers say it is a reallocation.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: From unallocated to allocated.

Mr PISONI: It says from investing expenditure.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, from unallocated to allocated.

Mr PISONI: I want to go back to ministerial responsibilities in your portfolio on page 12, Budget Paper 4, Volume 2. My understanding is that all departments were asked to undertake a review of their portfolio regarding boards and committees in about April last year. The aim of the review was to rationalise the number of boards and committees and to achieve savings to make a

greater use of alternative forms of community consultation engagement and a report, I understand, was due mid-June. Has that review been conducted?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am advised some work was done but do not have the exact details, so I will take that question on notice for you.

The CHAIR: Is it a point of order or a supplementary?

Mr KNOLL: No, it is a point of clarification. I have a series of omnibus questions to read into *Hansard*. Will the Chair be taking them as part of our three opposition questions or can I read them in at the end?

The CHAIR: You need to read them in at some point.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am happy for him to do them now.

The CHAIR: I beg your pardon, sorry. The line is open all day so you need to read them in before 4.15pm this afternoon.

Mr KNOLL: Okay, no worries.

The CHAIR: We will come to some arrangement about how much time that will take.

Mr HUGHES: Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 20, Total expenses. Can the minister advise if primary school zones in the Prospect area will be revised?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I thank the member for his question and I want to commend the federal member for Adelaide's constructive role in bringing this issue to my attention. I am aware there is a section in the Prospect area between the school zones of Prospect Primary and Nailsworth Primary boundaries that has historically been unzoned, so students who are in this non-zoned area can attend Prospect, Nailsworth or Prospect North primary schools, depending on each school's capacity at different year levels.

I understand that Prospect North Primary School does not have a school zone and is not experiencing enrolment pressures. It has excellent facilities, with \$3.75 million spent in 2007 upgrading the school. With capacity for 300 students and a current enrolment of 267, it has capacity to cope with local enrolments. The furthest distance anyone not living in a zoned area has to travel is 2.4 kilometres and I imagine those members on this committee who are from the country regions here would not have concerns with that relatively short distance to travel to school.

Needless to say, it is an anomaly and efforts are being made to address this. I can advise that my department has commenced a review to better align the zones. With the local education director leading this work with principals, we will continue consulting with governing councils during term 3 this year. The department anticipates the changed zones will be agreed and implemented by the start of the 2015 school year.

The Hon. P. CAICA: My question refers to Budget Paper 3, Budget Statement, page 7, table 1.5 and specifically refers to budget cut response measures. Is the government prepared to be involved in the federal government's Independent Public Schools initiative?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: A very timely question, I might say. Under ordinary circumstances we would never have considered signing up to something called 'independent public schools' but, as the saying goes, you take any port in a storm.

The Australian government announced its Independent Public Schools initiative in February this year. The initiative aimed to support public schools to move towards greater autonomy and local decision-making but, despite numerous requests for information from Christopher Pyne prior to the 2014 state election, I was unable to discover precisely how this would be achieved through the Independent Public Schools initiative. It seems likely this was a Pyne/Abbott education thought bubble; all rhetoric and no substance, all tip and no iceberg. Perhaps his unwillingness to share details of his IPS initiative was predicated on an assumption that the Labor government he was negotiating with would soon be forming Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition. Well, not so, sir.

The IPS initiative has been funded through a project agreement. Funding to South Australia under the agreement would be in the order of \$5.5 million over the period 2013-14 to 2016-17. We

will need whatever funding we can find to patch up the enormous hole that is going to be created by the federal cuts to education. IPS funding, purported to be \$5.5 million over four years, is small beer compared to the \$335 million cut.

South Australia's public school system already enjoys a very high degree of autonomy in comparison to most other jurisdictions. Reforms supporting greater school autonomy in South Australia have been appearing over many years. It was only a few weeks ago that Peter Mader, the Acting President of the Secondary Principals' Association said:

The reality is that in South Australia Christopher Pyne is 13 years too late. We have actually achieved all of the autonomies that he has been talking about in his program.

Our participation in this project agreement supports South Australia's ongoing reforms to support local decision-making in public schools. Let me be clear: the South Australian Labor government will not adopt an unfair, two-tiered public education system, nor will we agree to badge any of our schools as independent public schools. The reforms that we implement will be for the benefit of the entire system.

There will be two initiatives funded in South Australia under this project agreement. The first initiative aims to build the capacity and capability of school leaders to use existing levels of autonomy in managing unsatisfactory performance of staff within the existing framework of delegated authority. It will include the development and pilot of a time-limited process for managing unsatisfactory performance. Specialist staff will be based in participating schools and local partnerships. The commitment to natural justice and procedural fairness enshrined in current DECD policies will be retained.

The second initiative will be targeted toward supporting school governing councils to encourage greater parental engagement in student learning. The detail of this activity will be refined following the completion of the review of local school and preschool governance later this year, but will include a Parents in Education Week forum. I ask members to note that Christopher Pyne has yet to formally confirm that he has accepted our proposal. What he has done, however, is provide a signed copy of the agreement to my department, attached to a With Compliments slip; no letter to me, no formal announcement.

Mr Pyne, in pushing this Independent Public Schools initiative, did not actually realise the pushback that he would have not only from South Australia but also from other states. I am reliably informed that the Northern Territory and Tasmania have signed up with similar caveats, as has Victoria, I understand. Certainly the things that I was hearing out of New South Wales from the New South Wales minister are very much in line with South Australia's views that we would not operate a two-tiered system of public schools.

The CHAIR: It being 30 seconds to 1 o'clock, I declare this committee suspended until 2 o'clock. Thank you, minister, and thank you to your advisers.

Sitting suspended from 12:59 to 14:00.

Membership:

Ms Sanderson substituted for Mr Pisoni.

Ms Redmond substituted for Mr Knoll.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr T. Harrison, Chief Executive, Department for Education and Child Development.

Mr D. Waterford, Deputy Chief Executive, Department for Education and Child Development.

Ms J. Riedstra, Deputy Chief Executive, Department for Education and Child Development.

Mr B. Temperly, Executive Director, Strategy and Performance, Department for Education and Child Development.

Mr C. Bernardi, Chief Financial Officer, Department for Education and Child Development.

The CHAIR: Do you have an opening statement?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, I have a brief opening statement, thank you, Chair. The state government's investment in keeping the most vulnerable South Australians safe and protected and strengthening their families continues through the work of my department. Ensuring children are safe and protected remains our overriding concern.

I am very pleased to report that the new Multi-Agency Protection Service (MAPS), which will boost our ability to keep children safe, begins soon. By bringing together staff from the agencies most likely to have contact with children and their families—SAPOL, Education, Health, Housing SA and Families SA—MAPS will make the sharing of vital information much easier.

Families SA continues to move towards a family-focused child safety system, supporting families as much as possible so that children can continue to live with parents or return to them when it is safe to do so. The innovative Solution Based Casework program and a range of support services delivered by Families SA and our funded NGO partners, including targeted intervention, family preservation and reunification, are building on the strengths of families to keep them together.

In fact, international child protection expert Dr Dana Christensen was recently interviewed on 7.30 about his views on South Australia's child protection system and the work of Families SA. I was pleased to hear that Dr Christensen found Families SA was, and I quote, 'very responsive' and believes our 'workforce is among the best that I've ever worked with'. They were his words. That is great feedback for our workforce that has one of the hardest jobs across our Public Service. They are at the front line, working incredibly hard to ensure that children and young people across South Australia are safe.

In the last 12 months Families SA has increased the number of investigations by 4.9 per cent while at the same time the number of resubstantiations within three months and 12 months decreased by 3.7 and 4.5 per cent respectively. That means Families SA is undertaking more investigations while at the same time the number of children and young people subjected to instances of ongoing safety concerns has reduced.

For those children who cannot live with their families, we are striving to provide high quality case management and the best possible out-of-home care so the place they call home is safe and stable. To better respond to the needs of children and young people in out-of-home care, we are participating in a national survey seeking their views on issues such as security, family connection, participation in decision-making and leaving care.

For children in residential care, we are working to ensure that the places they live in meet a consistent standard, whether they are operated by Families SA or non-government organisations. Families SA will review annually all residential care facilities to ensure standards are being met.

Protecting the most vulnerable members of new and emerging ethnic groups, including refugees and skilled migrants, continues to be a priority. Families SA provides community development services and education programs for these groups which encourage discussion about child protection issues within their communities. We continue to work hard to ensure that all South Australian children can feel safe, secure and supported and have the same opportunities to succeed and that families have the support they need to do the best for their children.

Can I just briefly respond to a matter that was raised in the previous section around the materials and services polling that was undertaken. I am told the polling is only valid for the proposed school year and the majority of a simple majority (e.g. 51 per cent) is based on the number of respondents for each individual poll. So, it is the majority of those that respond.

The CHAIR: Thank you for that. Member for Adelaide, you are the lead speaker for the opposition?

Ms SANDERSON: Yes.

The CHAIR: Do you have an opening statement or would you like to go straight to some questions?

Ms SANDERSON: Straight to questions. Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 29, Activity indicators. What is the total number of notifications for the 2012-13 and 2013-14 years to the CAR line, including those that were assessed as not requiring further action?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: As I indicated very briefly, I think, in my opening statement, those numbers have increased quite considerably (the number of notifications coming in on our line). There was an increase of 6.1 per cent in child protection notifications from mandated notifiers and from members of the community in the year 2012-13, and those numbers are compared to 2011-12. This resulted in only a small increase in screened-in notifications, which may indicate improved assessment procedures, with a greater proportion of these notifications being investigated and substantiated.

South Australia experienced increases in all three categories of notification, investigation and substantiation in 2012-13 from 2011-12 as follows: screen-in notifications increased slightly to 19,120 from 19,056; investigations increased by 4.9 per cent to 5,333 from 5,082; and substantiations increased by 3.8 per cent to 2,221 from 2,139.

Ms SANDERSON: So, what was the total, because I have those figures? For example, in 2011-12 there were 19,056 notifications requiring further action; however, there were 37,879 total notifications.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: That is right.

Ms SANDERSON: So, what was the exact total for 2012-13 and then 2013-14?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Did I not just give you that?

Ms SANDERSON: No, you said a 6 per cent increase and you did not say what figure you were coming from.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, I said screened-in notifications increased from 19,056 to 19,120.

Ms SANDERSON: But that is only those that were requiring further action. What were the ones that were not requiring further action? It should be somewhere around 30,000-something, I would have thought.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: There were 39,733 mandated notifications and 19,120 of them were screened-in.

Ms SANDERSON: That is for 2012-13. So then, what was it for 2013-14? I just want the total.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We have estimates for that: 36,168 contacts made through the combined telephone and online reporting systems for CARL that raised an estimated 44,164 notifications, which was an increase.

Ms SANDERSON: Could I have the breakdown between the e-CARL and the phone line, please?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Can we take that on notice and get that to you?

Ms SANDERSON: Yes, for both years, if that is alright, 2012-13 and 2013-14.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We may have it here. In 2013-14 there were 11,956 contacts with CARL via the online e-CARL mechanism.

Ms SANDERSON: So e-CARL was 11,956?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, 11,956.

Ms SANDERSON: That is right—that was e-CARL. What was on the phone line?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: At 24,212.

Ms SANDERSON: Do you have the breakdown in tier levels—tier 1, tier 2, tier 3—for the total?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We will have to take that on notice.

The CHAIR: Member for Adelaide, this is your first estimates hearing today. Supplementary questions are the exception rather than the rule, generally, so you might want to phrase your question so that you get all the necessary information out in one go.

Ms SANDERSON: Thank you. What was the cost of the version 2 e-CARL, along with the cost of the new phone service that was updated?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We will need to take that on notice. It was spent over a number of years, but I am happy to get that information for you.

Ms SANDERSON: What is the wait time now on the phone line, during the day and after school?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Wait times have been an issue for some time for people getting through, particularly in certain hours, for example, during the hours when school is up. It has been an issue with teachers phoning through. So, we increased the staffing allocation in the 2013-14 year up to 59.5 FTEs, up from 53.5, and that was up from 49.5 in 2011-12. Despite the increased staff being appointed to the CARL and the introduction of the online alternative for making reports, the average waiting times on CARL during the day have continued to increase. We are in the process of again recruiting an additional 10 FTEs to the CARL call centre and implementing a range of additional service system improvements.

It is concerning that this has not seen an increase in the number of reports about abuse and neglect but rather an increase in reports. It has not seen an increase in confirmed reports, just an increase in the number of notifications. That is pretty much indicated by the fact that in 2013-14 the 36,168 contacts made through the combined telephone and online reporting for CARL resulted in the raising of an estimated 44,000 notifications. In 2012-13 there were 39,733.

Ms SANDERSON: Do you have the actual wait times now?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The average waiting time on the phone lines during the day is now 16 minutes and 47 seconds.

Ms SANDERSON: And after school?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I do not have that specific time frame, but it is 16 minutes on average.

Ms SANDERSON: Version 2 of e-CARL was meant to allow 5,000 users to self-register. Has that figure been reached and when was it reached?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am advised that it has been exceeded.

Mr HUGHES: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 30, Total expenses. Can the minister provide details about the commissioner for children and young people?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I thank the member for Giles for this question. South Australia is set to have a commissioner for children and young people, who will be a high profile and independent advocate for children across our state. The commissioner for children and young people, which was a recommendation of the Layton review, is about creating a stronger network of advocacy and support for children in South Australia. The government has listened to our community. We were clearly told during an extensive consultation that parents, carers and families wanted a commissioner. The commissioner, who will be an advocate for children in all sections of government, will promote awareness of the rights, views and interests of all children, while providing independent advice and recommendations to government.

I am very proud to say that this government has tripled funding and doubled the workforce in child protection compared to the previous Liberal government. Our investment and reforms in child protection since coming to government have been significant. For instance, we have established the Child Death and Serious Injury Review Committee, the Guardian for Children and Young People and

the Council for the Care of Children. The establishment of the commissioner is another step forward to ensure that children and young people are recognised and considered as contributing members of the community in their own right.

In relation to the establishment of a commissioner, it would appear that South Australian Liberals are out of step with the rest of the nation. Not only could their proposal cost around \$40 million a year, but from 1 July 2014 I am advised that no Australian state will include full investigative powers for their commissioners for children and young people. Importantly, the government's bill seeks to establish a child development council, charged with developing an outcomes framework for children and young people. It is important because it will monitor and support results-based, cross-sector delivery of program and policies that better support young people. The council and outcomes framework is sadly missing from the opposition's proposal.

The Hon. P. CAICA: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 12, Objective. Can the minister advise the committee whether or not child protection should be removed from the Department for Education and Child Development?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Providing the best possible start for children no matter what their background is at the very heart of everything the state government is doing. Whether that is through our 41 children's centres, the Strong Start program or the extremely successful Learning Together Program (which has 100 per cent success rate), this government has continually ensured that we provide every chance for every child.

Getting it right from the beginning of each child's life is critically important, so they can go on to become smart, healthy and happy adults. It is very alarming, to say the least, that in the lead-up to the state election the member for Unley proposed in his child protection policy to abdicate all responsibility for child protection and remove it from the Department for Education and Child Development. This caused great concern in the community and was panned by child protection expert Professor Emeritus Freda Briggs, who strongly believes it should stay right where it is.

I have held the child protection portfolio since July 2008, with the exception of 15 months between October 2011 and January 2013. The opposition has had the following shadow ministers: the member for Bragg from April 2007 to September 2008, the member for Davenport from September 2008 to July 2009, the Hon. Stephen Wade in another place from July 2009 to April 2010, the member for Bragg again from April 2010 to December 2011, the member for Morialta from December 2011 to February 2013, the member for Unley from February 2013 to April 2014, the Hon. Stephen Wade in another place again from April 2014 to June 2014, and now the member for Adelaide from June 2014 to the present. I congratulate her on her appointment as shadow spokesperson. I am sure she is going to tackle this responsibility with great gusto.

Mr GEE: I refer the committee to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 27, Objective. The minister briefly mentioned Professor Dana Christensen in her opening remarks. Can the minister provide details about the work this US child welfare expert is undertaking with Families SA?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Professor Dana Christensen is an international child welfare expert who has been working with Families SA staff to help them develop new skills so that they can provide ongoing support to vulnerable children and families. Professor Christensen, who was in Adelaide again just last month I think, has been training Families SA senior staff in solution-based case work. These senior staff are all then tasked with training other Families SA staff including front-line care and protection workers from across the state.

The aim of solution-based case work is to decrease the number of children being removed from their parents' care while reuniting more children with better functioning families. Professor Christensen is the Director of the Family Therapy Program and the Center for Family Resource Development at the University of Louisville's Kent School of Social Work. He has written about juvenile justice, child welfare and family therapy for more than 25 years.

He is the author of the book *Family Therapy: Theory and Practice* as well as *Solution Based Casework: An Introduction to Clinical and Case Management Skills in Social Work Practice*—a good read, I am told. He has also worked closely with state child welfare agencies, assisting them to improve case assessments and management practises.

Professor Christensen's focus is to provide Families SA staff with the skills they need to help families get support while increasing their access to services. The efforts of Families SA staff can at times be seen by vulnerable families as a threat rather than a source of support. This is an issue that Professor Christensen acknowledges but says it is a problem in similar departments all over the world.

In a radio interview during his recent visit, Professor Christensen said Families SA is a responsive department that compares favourably to other similar departments around the world. He said and I quote:

Families SA have taken on a redesign and a restructuring to address their issues. This is not to say that they've not had difficulties and will not continue to have difficulties. But we look for an agency that faces their own problems and is willing to go to work on them and try to resolve them. I must also just say...the line workforce is amongst the best I've ever worked with, even in terms of their grasp of our practice model, the scoring on tests and things like that.

That is high praise indeed for our Families SA work force.

The CHAIR: Thank you, minister. Supplementary from the member for Adelaide.

Ms SANDERSON: With Professor Christensen and her training, how many staff have been trained now for the last financial year and this financial year?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Professor Dana Christensen is a male.

Ms SANDERSON: Sorry.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: That is okay. Just to let you know. I am told is over 1,000 so far.

Ms SANDERSON: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 29, Activity indicators. How many children were placed under the guardianship of another person in the 2012-13 and 2013-14 years and can the minister explain if the guardianship of another person is designed to lead to possible adoption in the future?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I can answer the last part of the question first. No, we are not looking at severing the links that children who come under guardianship have with their birth families. I know that there are some states looking at that and I had quite a fiery debate with the former New South Wales minister for child protection. Her view was, I think, that you leave a child in foster care for six months and at that point you allow them to be adopted. Mr Waterford and I have been to England and we have seen what they are doing there and, more recently, I have seen this reported on national television. I think it is a scandal about to erupt. They were producing newspaper-type publications with children's photographs and a brief description of them to advertise them for adoption. The next proposal was to take them to local town halls and allow people to view the children.

The concerning thing about that is we are talking about kids here: we not talking about adopting a puppy. These children come with complex and difficult backgrounds. Many of them come into care having suffered incredible trauma, as you can imagine, so that plays out in their behaviour. You have to be incredibly careful about where these children are placed.

The other thing that is nearly universal is that, despite coming from very difficult backgrounds, children crave the link with their birth families, and I think it would be really inappropriate, unless the parent relinquished their child and offered them for adoption, for the state to decide to adopt them out. That is why we have gone down the path of other person guardianship—to give families certainty that they have care of this child until they are 18 and to give the kids a real sense that they belong to a family. I have had, in recent times, a couple of letters come from families who have been so overjoyed that their other person guardianship has finally gone through. On both occasions they sent photographs of their children and one of them was outside the Youth Court saying, 'This is a day we will celebrate every year, because we feel secure that this little boy is now part of our family.'

I understand that we commenced Other Person Guardianship in October 2010, and there is currently a total of 105 children under OPG orders. Forty-five per cent of these children are with their foster carers and 55 per cent are living with family members. We have had another 85 who have had assessments completed and the process is underway for those. There are times when I would like

to see this move a little faster than it has but, obviously, great care has to be taken when moving a child from guardianship of the minister to Other Person Guardianship. We have to make sure that there is that very strong connection between the foster family or kinship family and that child, that it is going to be sustainable and there are not issues that are going to see it break down.

One of the sad things that we saw in England was a number of adoptions break down and the children end up in therapeutic care because, not only have they lost their first family (their birth family), but they then get returned by their adoptive family. The psychological impact of that is enormous. I am very encouraged by Other Person Guardianship. I think it is a great opportunity for people who have real commitments to these kids to have the certainty of them in their care until they are 18. It means they do not have to do things like seek David's approval every time they want to take them interstate or overseas on a holiday, or to medical appointments, or what schools they get to go to. They have real life decisions over them, and I was really pleased to be the minister that enacted other person guardianship.

Ms SANDERSON: What is the breakdown of child adoptions in South Australia for Australian children and international children for 2012-13 and 2013-14, and were any of these children under the guardianship of the minister or guardianship of another person?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I think the rates of adoption are incredibly small. The rates of adoption have reduced over the last decade. In 2004, there were 79 adoptions in South Australia and in 2013-14 there were 14. This included one adoption order for a locally born child and orders granted in relation to children adopted from overseas.

Ms SANDERSON: That is 13 overseas and one local, I think—14 in total.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, that is right.

Ms SANDERSON: Do you have figures for 2012-13?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am sorry, I do not have the 2012-13 numbers here, but I am happy to get those for you.

The CHAIR: I just remind the member for Adelaide to let us know from time to time which budget line she is looking at, so that we can all be on the same page.

Ms SANDERSON: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 29, Performance indicators: Children in out-of-home care. If the total number in out-of-home care for 2012-13 is 2,678, what is the breakdown of those for example in foster care, relative care, family group homes, residential or independent living?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We should be able to give you those figures: 86.5 per cent of children in out-of-home care placements were in family-based care and the Families SA redesigned program is developing new systems that will improve service responses, quality assurance and outcome measures ultimately leading to positive differences being made to the lives of these children and their families.

We do have reliance on short-term commercial accommodation services in some instances. I cannot give you the exact number. I think we have 360 children in residential care facilities—that is, facilities owned by the state government—and then we have some children in extreme circumstances who are in more temporary placements generally being looked after by commercial carers.

Ms SANDERSON: For those in residential care, are the carers on an eight-hour roster or is there actually a live-in person who lives with them?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, they are rostered staff.

Ms SANDERSON: Is it possible to get the full breakdown in the future?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, it is. We will get that for you. I think from my discussions just recently, there are about 350 or 360 in residential care.

Ms SANDERSON: The figure for 2012-13 in this report was 2,678; the figure in the annual report says 2,615. Could someone explain the difference in the figure?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: What is the reference?

Ms SANDERSON: In the annual report, the total number in out-of-home care was 2,615 whereas in the budget it was 2,678, so I am just wondering what the difference might be.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: For 2012-13?

Ms SANDERSON: Yes, because they are the ones I have the final numbers for.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am told that the difference is generally the counting rules. Sometimes we have children who are over 18 who are still being cared for, so they get included in some of the numbers.

Ms SANDERSON: When I get the breakdown, will I be able to work it out? I would not like to think we are missing some children somewhere.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, we are not missing any.

Ms SANDERSON: My figures were not adding up. Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 29, Performance indicators. I think you might have just answered this, but how many children have been placed in the motel-style type accommodation? I think it was the 360 you just mentioned.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, I have not answered that. We are very strict about the type of accommodation that children go into and I am advised that as at 30 June there were no children in motel accommodation. We do have other forms of accommodation that they are accommodated in, however, so we will access holiday homes, for example, that sort of rental accommodation, or apartments to locate them. But it is only in extreme emergencies that a child will be put in a motel now whereas a few years ago we had large numbers of children costing enormous amounts of money in the worst accommodation with untrained staff, kids in the most desperate of circumstances. I am really pleased that with the Nation Building money that we had we have been able to build a lot of new homes that many of these children are now accommodated in, so this accommodation is pretty much generally just in extreme emergencies.

Ms SANDERSON: Is it possible to get the breakdown of how many children for the 2012-13 and 2013-14 years had stays in that type of accommodation of over 30 days and of over 60 days, the average age of the children and the age of the youngest?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I will take that on notice and see whether that can be provided to you but, again, I would say compared with the situation some years ago it is a very good news story as far as these children are concerned. We had 44 Nation Building houses constructed as part of the public housing build that we now have access to, which is just fantastic, providing great opportunities for us to be able to better accommodate children. Not all children can be placed with foster families. Not all children are appropriate for residential care either. There are some children who have such significant difficulties that it is unsafe to put them with other children.

Ms SANDERSON: Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 29, again under Performance indicators. How many children placed in out-of-home care have not been allocated a worker?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: All children are allocated a worker.

Ms SANDERSON: On the same page, regarding the guardianship of the minister, does the Rapid Response whole-of-government service apply to people aged 16 to 65 years even if they were only under a guardianship or custody order for up to 12 months?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Rapid Response applies to children under guardianship and those up to the age of 25.

Ms SANDERSON: I read in one of the reports they could have access to Skills For All or there were some types of training and that if they had been under the guardianship of the minister that actually lasted until they were aged 65, but what I could not tell was how long they had to have been under the guardianship.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: That is part of a recommendation from the Mullighan report that they should have access to training, but Rapid Response is about allied health services, dental, psychological services—

Ms SANDERSON: I think it was in the annual report, so I did not realise—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: —those sorts of services to keep people well.

Ms SANDERSON: So, that is just a recommendation?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The Rapid Response is up to age 25 whereas the training packages are available for older people. The trauma that some people have suffered is quite significant and it was recognised in Mr Mullighan's report that they did not always get the education and support that they needed, so this is a way of helping people get their lives back online.

Ms SANDERSON: So, it is just a recommendation at this stage, it is not actually implemented?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, it is implemented.

Ms SANDERSON: It is implemented?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It was his recommendation.

Ms SANDERSON: Right, and what I could not work out from the way it was written was whether that applied to a person who had perhaps even been under the guardianship of the minister only for a short time, like one month or three months. It seemed to read that it did apply to anyone who had ever been under the guardianship of the minister.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Guardianship for the minister is only for 12 months and beyond. So for those short periods of time we may have agreement to have them or have care for them, but they are not considered to be under guardianship.

Ms SANDERSON: I think it also referred to custody orders, which could be a shorter term. That is what I am trying to work out. If you have been under a custody order or a guardianship order of less than 12 months, does this apply to you?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I do not know the detail of the requirements of TAFE, but I would expect not. However I am happy to try to source that information for you.

Ms SANDERSON: That would be great. Would you have any idea of the cost of this program per annum? How many people are taking this up?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: That is a TAFE program. If you are asking about TAFE I do not have a budget for that.

Ms SANDERSON: So you do not pay it out of your budget line into TAFE or something like that?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No.

Mr HUGHES: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 27, Total expenses. Can the minister provide details about how the government is supporting foster and kinship carers?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Thank you, member for Giles. Foster and kinship carers are very much the backbone of our child protection system. Foster and kinship carers provide loving and safe homes for children and young people who are not considered to be safe to remain with their biological parents.

There are a number of ways that the department helps to recruit and support both foster carers and kinship carers across our community. The department continues to work with non-government organisation partners to enhance the focus on increasing the number of foster and kinship carers, and I am really pleased to report that in 2012-13 we increased the number of households commencing foster care by 185, which is higher than the numbers recruited for the previous year. We also reduced the number of exiting foster carers from the previous year.

In 2012-13 carer payments totalled more than \$25 million. At the same time my department has been working to increase the number of kinship carers providing a loving and stable home for a child under guardianship. In fact, there have been huge increases in the number of kinship carers,

and I can say that has not happened by accident. The department has undertaken a number of initiatives to better recruit and support kinship carers.

For instance, the development of kinship carers groups and networks in each region assists kinship carers to have a voice, receive training and provide support for each other, a kinship carer consultation group has been established to provide feedback and advice, and the employment of more Aboriginal staff ensures services are culturally appropriate and relevant, which is particularly important given the overrepresentation of Aboriginal children and young people in the child protection system. In addition to this, a placement support fund provides financial support to kinship carers to help in establishing or maintaining placements. Grants of up to \$5,000 are available.

With all these programs working to better support kinship carers it is not surprising that we have seen a 700 per cent increase in these carers under this Labor government. In fact, in 2001 the Liberal government supported just 147 kinship carers; under Labor we now have 1,100 kinship carers. Significantly, kinship care now represents 51 per cent of all children and young people in family-based care, overtaking foster care for the second year running. This is significant, as it means that children maintain some level of family continuity, receiving safe and loving care by a relative, kin or significant other person known to the child. In many cases grandparents are the carers for these children, and I am pleased that under our government we continue to increase the number of foster carers and kinship carers so that children under guardianship have the opportunity to live with loving families.

Ms SANDERSON: The same page reference, page 27, Financial Commentary: 2014-15 Budget/2013-14 Estimated Result. There was a \$10.6 million increase in expenses due to additional resourcing for children requiring out-of-home care. Which expense line does that apply to?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Sorry, did you say page 27?

Ms SANDERSON: Yes, of Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, right down the bottom, the financial commentary, the \$10.6 million increase.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Okay.

Ms SANDERSON: I just wonder which line of the expenses above that \$10.6 million should show up.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It would be spread between employee benefit expenses and supplies and services.

Ms SANDERSON: Could I have the breakdown of how that was separated? I am just trying to get my figures to add up.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We will have to take that one on notice. We are happy to try to do that for you.

Ms SANDERSON: My next question may or may not help. Employee expenses have increased from the estimated result of \$155.754 million to the budget for 2014-15 to \$168.823 million. I can see the explanations given. If you add to the \$155.754 million the amount of \$3 million for Fair Work Australia, \$1.8 million for the EBA and then minus \$0.6 million for the targeted voluntary separation packages, that comes to \$159.954 million, which leaves a difference of \$8,869,000. That could be part of that \$10.6 million but I cannot calculate it.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I would expect that a large portion of that is the employment of additional employees to work in our residential care facilities. We are working towards employing an additional 363, I think, and we have already employed an additional 140. So we hope to have all of those employed by the end of 2015. I assume that a large proportion would be that. I am also told that the additional resourcing in 2014-15 to fund non-government organisations for the impact of the Fair Work Australia Equal Remuneration Order for social and community sector workers is not in the employee benefit line.

Ms SANDERSON: So that would be in supplies and services perhaps?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, it is in the grants and subsidies line.

Ms SANDERSON: Do you know how much that would be so I can make it all add up?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: That is \$3 million.

Ms SANDERSON: So the \$3 million for Fair Work Australia is in grants and subsidies?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes.

Ms SANDERSON: Thank you. Regarding the 140 staff that you have now already employed, is it possible to get a breakdown by qualification area? I believe that the 360 total by the end of 2015 are all going to be qualified staff.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes.

Ms SANDERSON: So the 140 that you already have, is it possible to get their qualifications broken down?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: They are all qualified youth workers and their qualifications range from certificate level through to degree.

Ms SANDERSON: Is it possible to get how many of each category?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: To do that we would have to go through individual personnel files. It is not an easy exercise. I am not sure how important that information is to the member. Do we need to be diverting resources to get that for you when we are employing all qualified workers, as I said, and they all come with varying qualifications?

Ms SANDERSON: It is of interest only in that we have had several people contact my office regarding the qualifications and whether they are relevantly qualified or have the experience; for example, experience in a domestic violence background. We have had some people contact me who believe that some staff should have that as a background because some children have been removed from a mother where maybe the mother is actually a victim of domestic violence and it is the male who is causing the issue, and perhaps the children. So, people allege that they would like good training and to have the background training and qualifications could help allay their fears.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We put them through six weeks of training ourselves when they are employed, so they will go through a series of training modules to ensure that they have the skills necessary for those particular environments. Now, taking children from a woman who is the victim of domestic violence but is protective of her children, I would venture to say, would be a very, very long bow to draw. What the department consistently looks for if children are in a situation of harm is: is there a protective person who is going to look after them? Taking them into care is really the last resort and often if they cannot stay in the family home they may even be placed with a relative and a care plan put in place rather than actually take them away.

If you have an example of where you think a woman was protective of her children and had them taken away nonetheless, I would be very keen to explore that. I am sure you have been around long enough to know that very often when people come in and talk to you about these situations they do not always give you the full story. It is an incredibly difficult area in which to work. It is very subjective. Different people have different responses to different things, but I can guarantee you that there is no-one who says, 'Thank you for coming in and assessing what's happening in our home.' The large numbers of children coming into care is very difficult for the state to deal with. It is a situation that we only do as a last resort because we cannot be guaranteed that there is someone who is going to protect them.

Ms SANDERSON: So, the 360 extra staff, and you already have 140 of those, they already come in with a qualification between a certificate IV and a degree, then they go through six weeks of training with your department and then the training with Professor Dana Christensen. Is that on top of the six weeks and is that a day or how long is that training?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, they do. It can vary, I am told, between 2½ days to a week of face-to-face training with him and then there is a certification process that follows where their day-to-day work is assessed.

Ms SANDERSON: Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 28, the Family by Family program. Can the minister advise how many families have been through that program now?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Good question. While my officers are looking for that detail, the other Sunday I popped into the local Bunnings and there was a group of people there with the sausage sizzle raising funds for Family by Family, so I had the chance to have a very quick chat with them and they were incredibly excited. The amazing thing about this program is that the families that are picked up in it are very excited and grateful for the opportunity. The Premier and I went to the launch of it—I think it was last year, it would have been last year, the launch of Family by Family—and the host families and the families that had been taken into the program were there. The host families in many instances had suffered some difficulty themselves and had got through that and were just really pleased to be able to make that connection and help someone else through the process.

The other thing about it is that the families receiving this support see it as non-threatening. They see it as friends coming to them and helping them, and our aim is to ensure they do not fall into the statutory child protection system. It is expanding into the western suburbs, I think, because that is the group I was talking to the other day. I am not sure whether we have the figures for how many families. I am told we have not yet received their final figures because it has only been going for 12 months. The people I was talking to the other day were an expansion of the program into the western suburbs, so really good news.

Ms SANDERSON: Back to Professor Dana Christensen, the training of 2½ to five days, is that accredited training?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: They end up with their certification. They go through a certification process. This is about a different way of delivering the services we provide for families. It is not about getting a degree but about a different mindset, a different way of working with families, hoping we will get some different outcomes.

Ms SANDERSON: Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 29, Activity indicators: by way of background, apparently at least 1,500 teachers have given responses to the DART team—a special team set up. Information from CARL is then matched to the C3MS case file for a child. How sophisticated is the matching? For example, if a neighbour reported a child in their street and might just know their address, approximate age and that they are either female or male. They might not know a date of birth or exact age.

How sophisticated is the system to be able to match that with another report that came from someone who did know the age, the address or the name? If 10 different people, for example, had witnessed some abuse of a child—the school teacher might know the date of birth and all the details and the neighbour, the person who saw them at the supermarket or goes to the same athletic club, may not—can the system match based on just a bit of information? Can it be grouped together to see that there is a problem?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am assured that, yes, it is very highly sophisticated and can match all those things, and can even match different spellings of the names.

Ms SANDERSON: Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 28, the financial commentary of the 2013-14 estimates versus the 2013-14 budget. There is a \$4.2 million increase in expenses, largely due to a \$2.8 million additional resourcing for children requiring out-of-home care and the targeted voluntary separation packages, which equates to \$3.4 million. Which expense line does that affect?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: With employee-related matters it would be employee benefit expenses.

Ms SANDERSON: But I think the 0.6, the targeted voluntary separation packages—before you mentioned that they actually came out of the grants and subsidies because it was not your own employees but the community groups.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, before we were talking about the first dot point on the page. If you look at that, it is additional funding to non-government organisations as a result of the work pay case, so that went to grants and subsidies because it is money to non-government organisations in relation to their contract so they can pay their staff.

Ms SANDERSON: So then the \$1.8 million, I guess, went to your own employee expenses?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Higher employee expenditure?

Ms SANDERSON: Yes.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, that would have gone to our employee expenses, that is right.

Ms SANDERSON: Then the targeted voluntary separation packages would come out of employee expenses?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, that is an employee expense.

Ms SANDERSON: What about the \$6 million savings measures then? Where would that come from?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: What \$6 million? The additional savings measures? That is spread across all areas—

Ms SANDERSON: Is it possible to get a breakdown?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: —of our total budget, not just Families SA budget, but the total budget. I am sorry; I just have to correct that. I am advised they are Families SA savings.

Ms SANDERSON: Great. Thank you.

The CHAIR: We are now looking at early childhood development.

Membership:

Mr Pisoni substituted for Ms Sanderson.

Mr Knoll substituted for Ms Redmond.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr T. Harrison, Chief Executive, Department for Education and Child Development.

Ms J. Riedstra, Deputy Chief Executive, Department for Education and Child Development.

Ms T. Strachan, Executive Director, Office for Children and Young People, Department for Education and Child Development.

Ms K. Jordan, Director, Early Childhood Services, Department for Education and Child Development.

Mr C. Bernardi, Chief Financial Officer, Department for Education and Child Development.

Mr B. Temperly, Executive Director, Strategy and Performance, Department for Education and Child Development.

The CHAIR: Would the minister like to introduce any new advisers?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Ms Riedstra is back with us and I also have Ms Trish Strachan, who heads up our early childhood development section.

The CHAIR: Would you like to make a statement, minister, about this section?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, I think I am fine, thank you.

The CHAIR: We will go straight into questions. Are you here for the duration, member for Unley?

Mr PISONI: Yes.

The CHAIR: Could I just remind you the omnibus questions need to be read into *Hansard* at some point. Just bear that in mind.

Mr PISONI: Sure. Thank you very much for your reminder. That is why the member for Schubert has come back.

The CHAIR: That is why he is here.

Mr PISONI: He is waiting with anticipation, sir.

The CHAIR: Thanks for coming down, member for Schubert.

Mr PISONI: This relates to the objectives on Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 15. Is the minister now aware of the laws in regard to corporal punishment in education in South Australia?

The CHAIR: Sorry; which line was that, member for Unley?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Are you now aware how material and services charges are levied?

Mr PISONI: This relates to the objectives of the early childhood development program.

The CHAIR: Which line?

Mr PISONI: The objectives.

The CHAIR: Which page is it on? Humour me.

Mr PISONI: Sorry, it is on page 15. I did advise that prior to asking the question.

The CHAIR: Thanks.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Are you now aware of how material and services charges are calculated?

Mr PISONI: Point of order. I believe you opened up the line for early childhood development.

The CHAIR: That is right.

Mr PISONI: The minister is still answering questions from the previous session.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Well, how is this early childhood development? What, because we do not allow them to be smacked?

Mr PISONI: I am just wondering if you are aware of the law now?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It is wonderful. Yes, I am, and I am aware that—

Mr PISONI: You certainly were not yesterday.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: What did I say yesterday? I said that, as far as I am concerned it is considered to be assault; that is what I consider it to be. I grew up in a household where—

Mr PISONI: No, what you said yesterday was—

The CHAIR: Member for Unley, let the minister answer the question.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I grew up in a household where my father did not believe in physical punishment, and he was considered to be strange during that era when kids were regularly given the strap. I also went to school and was regularly belted across the hand for talking too much in class. Now, as I said yesterday, it has not stopped me talking. I was clearly disruptive and it is really interesting that in the same week that I go to a forum about children at school and disciplinary processes where the National Children's Commissioner was advocating very strongly the human rights of children and their right to have an education and not to be treated badly at school—certainly the issue of corporal punishment did not come up because that had long gone—we have Mr Kevin Donnelly saying he does not think there is anything wrong with it.

Mr PISONI: You did not even know the law. You rang up, 'Oh, sorry I don't know.' It is hysterical.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: This is the man. No, I did not ring up and—

Mr PISONI: Hysterical.

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Well, at least I did not have my tongue in my cheek or my foot in my mouth, did I?

Mr PISONI: Absolutely hysterical.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Did I? I did not have my foot in my mouth.

The CHAIR: Does the minister feel she has adequately answered the question?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It is not an issue in our schools. We do not have corporal punishment and we have not had corporal punishment since my kids were at school, I do not think. No, maybe it was earlier.

Mr PISONI: 1991, minister.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Thank you for that. I was about to say it was banned in the early 1990s but certainly when my kids were in school it was not used then, nor would they have wanted to use corporal punishment. I think the idea that you can educate children by beating them is just ludicrous. Here we have one of Christopher Pyne's key advisers in education, his chief adviser, now reviewing the Australian curriculum for our schools, coming out on the same week, the very same week the National Children's Commissioner is advocating for children's human rights in the way behaviour management is run in our schools, saying it is okay to use corporal punishment in our schools.

Mr PISONI: And you did not even know the answer as to whether it was legal or not. You did not know. It was great radio, I have to say.

The CHAIR: That was a very poorly-phrased question member for Unley. Could you try again?

Mr PISONI: Certainly. Are you aware of the Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011 that states that any form of corporal punishment is an offence with a penalty of \$10,000?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Thank you.

Mr PISONI: At least you know that now. My next question relates to the expenses line on the same page. In regard to employees expenses, what was the total payout for Mr Keith Bartley when he resigned unexpectedly last year, what was the total payment he received for services after leaving South Australia, were there any associated legal costs or travel costs and what were they?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: My understanding is that he was paid no additional money for any services provided after he left. I will take the question on notice and get the amount of his severance payment for you.

The CHAIR: The member for Mount Gambier has a question.

Mr BELL: Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 18. In 2014-15, the child-to-staff ratio for children under 2 will be provided at a ratio of 1:4 replacing the 1:5 ratio. Given that there is a reduction in FTEs going forward, how is the department aiming to staff these increased ratios?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We are not reducing staff in front-line services. We are not reducing teachers, we are not reducing preschool teachers and we are not reducing people who are providing front-line services. I explained in my original opening statement how we had targeted our TVSPs.

Mr BELL: Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 18, same page, next row down. Regarding the number of primary contact staff with relevant formal qualifications in preschool, the target was 1,300. The actual number in 2013-14 was only 1,214.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes.

Mr BELL: That is 14 more than the previous year and well short of the target. Can the minister explain the circumstances around that and why that target was not met?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It was to do with the implementation of the Same First Day policy, as I understand it. My officials can correct me if I am wrong. The way that was managed was in the last year in the preparation for the Same First Day policy coming in, the enrolments in the centres dropped, therefore the requirement for the same number of staff was not there. It will stabilise now that we have all children starting at the same time.

Mr BELL: Supplementary to that, sir. How many primary contact staff were counted twice? I read in the report that it said some numbers may be counted more than once if employed at multiple preschools. I am wondering whether that 14 increases.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The numbers here, I am assuming, are about the required number employed across all our sites. It depends on the configuration of how the preschools provide their services, so to identify how many are counted twice does not mean that we are not complying with the ratios. It just means they have another location in which they can work. If we can get that breakdown for you, we will. If it is too onerous, we probably will not.

Mr BELL: I understand: that is fine. Can the minister outline the criteria for the higher targeted voluntary separation packages in 2012-13?

The CHAIR: Member for Mount Gambier, could you point to a budget line, please?

Mr BELL: It is page 17, second dot point down. There were voluntary separation packages in 2012-13 of \$1.5 million, yet in the year before it was budgeted at around \$400,000, so there was an increase of nearly \$1 million, if my memory is correct. More people took up the voluntary separation package?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes. In order for us to meet our savings and targeting particular areas where we could make efficiencies—people who are surplus, who do not have positions, basically.

Mr PISONI: On that same line, I understand an election promise was to run another round of what I think was commonly known as the 'burnt out bonus' for DECD staff.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, it was not. It was not commonly known as that at all. What are you referring to?

Mr PISONI: Certainly, that is how it was referred to, the \$50,000 bonus for encouraging teachers—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The Teacher Renewal program, is that what you are talking about?

Mr PISONI: The Teacher Renewal program. Are you able to advise whether the issues you had before the Equal Opportunity Commission last year have now been resolved, and what was the outcome?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: There is still one issue to be resolved.

Mr PISONI: What was the outcome of the other issue?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The other person withdrew.

Mr PISONI: Is it your intention that there will be no introduction of the renewal program until the outcome of that Equal Opportunity Commission case is known?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Our position is that we would like this matter settled so that we can move forward with confidence, yes.

Mr PISONI: And have you already applied for tax exemption status with the ATO for recipients?

The CHAIR: Member for Unley, can you remind me which budget line you are referring to?

Mr PISONI: It is the same as the staff line that was referred to by the member for Mount Gambier.

The CHAIR: About the voluntary separation packages?

Mr BELL: Page 17, second dot point.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am not sure whether we have or have not, but this matter has not been settled in the Equal Opportunity Commission yet. It is our intention, as soon as that is settled, to proceed with the Teacher Renewal Program.

Mr PISONI: Will the program change or be in a different form to the first program?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I guess that will depend on the outcome of the tribunal. It has always been focused on ensuring that we get graduate or early career teachers. The challenge has been about whether it is an age discrimination issue. We do not consider it to be that, but we need to wait and see what the Equal Opportunity Tribunal decides.

The Hon. P. CAICA: Minister, my question refers to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2 at page 15—Income and grant revenue. Can you guarantee that all preschool age children in South Australia will continue to be provided with 15 hours per week preschool for the year before they start school?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I thank the member for Colton for this question and, no, sadly, I cannot do that. Each child in South Australia could lose three hours of child care next year if the federal government stops the universal access program. I am sure you would know, visiting the kindergartens that you have in your area, that the state government has been funding 12 hours preschool for our preschoolers in the year before they go to school. The Universal Access to Early Childhood Education program that we signed up to with the former federal government provided funding for an additional three hours a week to ensure that all children got 15 hours a week preschool.

The preschools in South Australia went through an enormous process to consult with parents about how they would deliver these additional hours. Something like 20,000 families in South Australia are likely to be impacted. This money, as I understand it, has been put into contingencies in the budget, so they have not cancelled it and they have not said they will go ahead with it. What it amounts to is in excess of \$30 million a year of funding, so if the federal government does not continue with the universal access program, that is \$30 million a year to our preschools and the state government cannot make up that money.

We do very well here in South Australia with the cost of family day care and other childcare arrangements, but the outcomes for children having a full year of preschool and having the 15 hours is really setting them on the right track and was an indication, really, of the importance the former government placed on early childhood development, understanding that those very early years are probably the most important in a child's education. It sets them on the right track.

Now we have all our preschools in South Australia just sitting and waiting and it is not a case of, 'Oh, well, we'll just go back to 12 hours.' They have to reconfigure the entire way they deliver their services. It is just outrageous that I am sitting here today and I cannot guarantee to you or any other member of this house that children in South Australia next year—or, importantly, their parents—will continue to get 15 hours preschool.

Mr PISONI: Supplementary, if I may, sir. Can you advise when the 15 hours per week started? When was the first year?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The program was extended last year. It was due to come to an end and it was extended to this year, but it had already run its three years. It had already run three years and then it was extended for another 18 months last year.

Mr PISONI: So, last year was year 4 or 5 of the program?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, last year was year 3.

Mr PISONI: Last year was year 3 of the program and this year is year 4.

Mr GEE: My question relates to Budget Paper 6, page 38. Can the minister advise the house how the allied health in children's centres program is helping South Australian families?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I was very pleased that the budget provided a further \$13.7 million to expand the allied health services in our children's centres across South Australia. I think I have mentioned previously that we now have 41 children's centres in South Australia and I think four of

those are family and children's centres that have a specific focus on Aboriginal families and, again, that is a program that the federal government has now cut. It is an absolute disgrace. These centres are fantastic, providing great support to families in a whole range of ways.

Staff from this program in the Department for Education and Child Development and SA Health recently received a letter of recognition from the Premier for outstanding contribution to the public sector. The program attracted this formal recognition for its many wonderful achievements in promoting children's healthy development. Occupational therapists, speech pathologists and other allied health staff are employed to provide programs that are specifically tailored for children at all the children's centres.

The current program works from a primary prevention and early intervention approach to build the capacity of children's centres, staff and parents to support children's optimal development. The program delivers a variety of activities including developmental screening, staff development sessions, parent consultation, and parent and child group programs. There are many wonderful examples of the individual programs that different centres have established to meet the needs of their local community, like the Sleepwise workshops run at one children's centre last year. As all parents of young children know, good sleep habits are essential not only to the healthy development of children but also the wellbeing of the whole family.

I can never quite get over how you can go to one of these centres and see 12 of these little things laying down next to one another fast asleep, but when they go home mum and dad cannot get them to bed or get them to sleep. It is just amazing. They recognise the need within their local communities, particularly for children with developmental delays. One children's centre combined with a sleep expert from Disability SA to provide three workshops on good sleep habits. More than 20 parents attended the session and I understand many reported significant improvements in their children's sleep.

The language and listening groups run at another children's centre is another excellent example of how the allied health program responds to community needs. This centre had a number of Aboriginal children with delayed speech and language skills, often resulting from middle ear disease. The weekly sessions involved helping children develop their listening and language skills in a good acoustic environment, as well as developing a family literacy and learning strategy to help parents support their children at home.

I understand that the evaluation of the program that occurred last year showed it is having a very positive effect on the lives of children and their families and is seen as beneficial by the staff in the children's centres. I am pleased this additional funding will see more services being provided in children's centres around the state and I look forward to hearing more positive stories about how the allied health program is helping children and families across South Australia. I am sure all members will join me in congratulating all staff who work so tirelessly with their communities to deliver these fantastic programs.

Mr GEE: Budget Paper 6, page 42, Strong Start program—expansion. Can the minister please provide details about the aims of the Strong Start program, and is the government honouring its election commitment to expand the program?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I think becoming a parent for the first time is a wonderful experience, but it can also be incredibly daunting. The state government's Strong Start program, which helps first-time pregnant mums prepare for their baby's arrival, is about ensuring that children have the best start.

Strong Start was originally launched in the North last year with the state government committing \$3.3 million to implement the program. Strong Start North supports between 40 to 50 women at any one time, and so far more than 120 first-time mums have been referred to the program. We have now committed another \$3.2 million over the next four years to develop and implement Strong Start South. This means that first-time mums in the southern suburbs of Adelaide will be better supported at one of the most challenging times in their life.

The program aims to improve the knowledge of parents about infant and children's health and development needs and to facilitate access to support services. Through Strong Start, support workers give first-time pregnant mums advice and information to help them keep their newborn safe

and comfortable. This includes where the baby should sleep, how and what to feed them, what kind of clothes and nappies they will need, and how to prepare for the birth. Strong Start also helps new families address problems like finding stable housing and dealing with mental health and drug and alcohol issues.

One of the program's key strengths is that workers visit first-time pregnant mums in their homes, taking the pressure off them having to get to an appointment. Workers can also drive first-time parents to their appointments if need be. The state government already has a range of strategies in place, including the network of children's centres across Adelaide and in country areas that is supporting parents to care for their children from birth. Strong Start goes a step further, paving the way for a better life for a child even before they are born.

Mr BELL: Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 15, Sales of goods and services. In 2013-14 sales of goods and services were budgeted at \$2.9 million. In actual fact, the income generated was \$6.6 million. Can the minister outline the increase in unexpected sales of goods and services, which is over double the budgeted amount?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: My officers are looking for that information for you. If you have another question I am happy to move on to that and come back to you with an answer.

Mr BELL: Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, same page, Other income. Can the minister outline the discrepancy between the budgeted other income in 2013-14, at one point \$1.7 million, and the result, which will come in at only \$220,000? Can the minister explain the budgeted amount of a paltry \$7,000 for 2014-15 compared with a massive \$3.4 million in 2012-13?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am happy to take that on notice, but on first glance I would think it was probably the cancellation of some of the federal government partnership agreement amounts. That is just—

Mr BELL: That would not come in as grant revenue?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It depends. However, I will take that on notice and get that information for you.

Mr BELL: Thank you, minister. Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 17. The first dot point says 'additional savings measures in 2013-14 (\$1.8 million)'. Can the minister highlight what these savings are?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: This is the early years' share of the overall department savings that I outlined earlier today.

Mr BELL: Okay. So it has just been moved—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It is just their share apportioned.

Mr BELL: Thank you.

The CHAIR: Member for Colton.

The Hon. P. CAICA: I refer to Budget Paper 6, Part 2, page 39, referring to the Little Big Book Club. Minister, can you advise the committee about the expansion of the Little Big Book Club?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I can. We have always invested in programs that demonstrate the importance of reading to babies and children. We know that reading is one of the easiest ways to start educating children, and it has an enormous and positive impact on their lives. In this year's state budget more than \$1 million was allocated for the Little Big Book Club to deliver on our election commitment. In addition to the baby pack, which is currently distributed by the Little Big Book Club, this new funding will enable the development of reading packs for every family of a toddler and preschooler in South Australia. This means that every family will receive a pack when their child is six months, 18 months and three years of age.

Research has shown time and again that the most important teachers in children's lives are their parents, and it is absolutely vital that education is valued at home before children start school. The three initiatives in the Little Big Book Club program are: a pack that includes a picture book for an 18-month-old, a numeracy book, a CD with singalong nursery rhymes, an activity book focusing

on parental engagement and Play-Doh; a preschool reading pack that includes picture books and activity books focusing on time and numeracy concepts, ideas for lunchboxes and a book list; a training program for carers and professionals within Families SA and the foster care sector about current research on childhood development and hands-on ideas for reading, singing, talking and playing. The toddler pack will be ready for distribution by November this year and the preschooler pack by November next year. South Australia is recognised internationally as a great place to raise healthy and creative children, and the Little Big Book Club will ensure that our reputation in this area continues to grow.

The CHAIR: The member for Giles.

Mr HUGHES: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 30, Statement of comprehensive income—net cost of providing services. Playgroups provide a great opportunity for parents to meet and be involved in accredited appropriate activities for small children. Is the state government providing support for programs that provide these opportunities?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I thank the member for Giles. The Playgroups in Schools project currently involves 38 schools and it is making a real difference in enabling schools to better engage with families and develop learning partnerships with them. We are also seeing great outcomes for children in the uptake of literacy and numeracy activities at home, such as drawing, counting, painting and writing since they started attending playgroup.

We want to increase the number of supported playgroups, and 20 schools from across the state will benefit from the latest round of the Playgroups in Schools project. The initiative will result in more families having access to regular, play-based early learning activities, with a particular focus on numeracy and literacy development. Already 38 schools have taken part in this initiative and it is making a real difference in enabling schools to better engage with families.

It is very pleasing that another 13 regional and seven metropolitan schools have the opportunity to come on board, and we hope to see similar positive results at these locations. The schools in the latest round of the Playgroups in Schools project will receive about \$2,400 for resources and operational support to implement the program, which will begin in term 3.

Members might be interested to know that the schools in this latest round are: Cadell Primary School, Nangwarry Primary School, Curramulka Primary School, Para Hills Schools R-7, Fulham Gardens Primary School, Para Hills West Primary School, Hackham West R-7 School, Port Vincent Primary School, Huntfield Heights Primary School, Ramco Primary School, John Pirie Secondary School, Renmark North Primary School, Kongorong Primary School, Solomontown Primary School, Mallala Primary School, the South Australian School for Vision Impaired, Miltaburra Primary School, Stradbroke School, the Mount Gambier Independent Learning Centre—so that is very good for Mount Gambier—and last but not least, the Whyalla Stuart Campus R-7.

The CHAIR: Good news. I believe the member for Colton has another question.

The Hon. P. CAICA: I do indeed, sir. I refer to Budget Paper 6, Part 2, page 41, and a program that I think is very impressive. Can the minister advise the committee about the Botanic Gardens Kitchen Garden Program and even elaborate a bit further on other outdoor learning activities that might occur?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I thank the member for this question. This was part of our election commitment in relation to early childhood. We said we would provide funding to the Botanic Gardens for a Kitchen Garden Program. This budget delivers on that commitment by allocating \$400,000 per year for four years, a total of \$1.6 million, for the Botanic Gardens to run a Kitchen Garden Program for preschool and school students. The funding will provide a hands-on kitchen garden to be built at the Adelaide Botanic Garden that will be a hub of activity around plants and food and is aimed to inspire and help young people to grow food at home, in schools and in their communities.

The kitchen garden will provide a learning and demonstration space for students and teachers, showing them how to grow food, supporting them to commit their gardening activity to the Australian curriculum and providing professional development for school staff. Program staff will produce curriculum and other resource materials, will deliver professional training in the gardens and

in schools and will work with school and preschool staff to create sustainable kitchen gardening programs across the state.

While the space will primarily be used by preschool children and school students, it will also be used by vocational students from the Australian Centre of Horticultural Excellence and by the community. To date, landscape architects have been commissioned to provide concept drawings for the project. A steering committee will be established, with membership from DECD, natural resource management, Fitzroy Adventure Playground and the Botanic Gardens. The project builds on our earlier commitment to double the number of schools participating in the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program to 82 by providing \$10,000 grants. The one-off grant can be used for training, attendance costs, staffing or infrastructure to implement the program.

We met our target of 20 new schools signing up by June 2014. Again, you might be interested to know those schools. They are: Fulham Gardens, Virginia primary, Lake Windemere (birth to year 7), Fraser Park primary, Ingle Farm East primary, Murray Bridge junior primary, Huntfield Heights primary, Murray Bridge South primary (so the member for Hammond gets a guernsey a couple of times here), Lyndoch Primary School (I am sure the member for Schubert will be pleased with that), Athelstone primary, Charles Campbell College, East Torrens primary, Glen Osmond primary, South Downs primary, Vale Park primary, Robertstown primary, Salisbury Downs primary, Settlers Farm campus, Thorndon Park primary and Lonsdale Heights Primary School.

Mr PISONI: This refers to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 25, Performance indicators. The government has made about 64 media announcements on numeracy and literacy programs since 2002 and in year 3 NAPLAN results in every category: reading—

The CHAIR: Member for Unley, how does this relate to early childhood development?

Mr PISONI: Year 3 is not early childhood development?

The CHAIR: Not by definition, no.

Mr PISONI: Sorry, there were questions about the Stephanie Alexander garden.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, for preschoolers.

Mr PISONI: And there have been other questions about—

The CHAIR: Well, questions from you, which were slightly out of order.

Mr PISONI: This is directly relevant to questions that have been asked about early childhood development earlier because the minister has been telling us that we are getting—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Did you go write some new questions over lunch?

The CHAIR: You talk about year 3 students—

Mr PISONI: No.

The CHAIR: Perhaps rephrase the question.

Mr PISONI: We heard earlier that the 15 hours has been in operation for three years. My question relates to year 3 NAPLAN results, which are obviously outcomes of the early learning development program of this government. We have seen from 2008 to 2013, a five-year period, a deterioration against the national average in every single category. Reading, for example, has deteriorated 2.3 per cent at 400.5 in 2008 against a national average of 419.1. We have seen deteriorations in NAPLAN results over that period. Is the minister able to explain why that is happening?

The CHAIR: It is a tenuous link, but if the minister chooses to answer the question, she can.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The member for Unley was referring, as I understand it, to year 3 results in relation to reading, and the budget papers here indicate that there was an increase in achieving the national minimum standard of reading.

Mr PISONI: I am talking about from 2008, from the first year of the NAPLAN results.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We are seeing that last year we had improvement in, I think, 14 out of 20 categories. When you put programs in place, last year was the first year we had mandated instruction in our schools, in our junior primary and primary schools, for numeracy, literacy and science. Our children's centres are still being built across South Australia. I well remember going out doing the consultation in the community before the establishment of these children's centres, being involved in The Virtual Village report, listening to families, understanding that they wanted one place that they could go to get not only what they needed for their child's development but also the additional services they might need, which vary between different areas.

We know that we are now in the first year of testing, where we will have all students having gone through the full cohort of NAPLAN. Prior to the introduction of NAPLAN by the federal Labor government, there was no measure of the outcome of students. We know that the federal government now do not want—

Mr PISONI: There was statewide testing introduced by Rob Lucas. You can retract that any time you like.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: You now do not want these things published online. They do not want the My School website, because they do not want to be measured, they do not want to see the impact of their lack of policies. Quite frankly, when we went to the last state election, as far as I could ascertain no early childhood policies were put forward by the Liberal opposition at all. If I am wrong in relation to that—

Mr PISONI: Mr Chair, my question was specifically about NAPLAN results deteriorating—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: —and if you did have any early childhood policy, tell me what it was.

Mr PISONI: —in five years.

The CHAIR: Yes, your question drew a very long bow and the minister is answering the question.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Tell me what your policy was. I would be really interested to know what your early childhood policy was.

Mr PISONI: A deterioration in five years against the national average.

The CHAIR: Have you finished your answer, minister?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I have, thank you.

Mr BELL: Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 18, government expenditure per child in early childhood education and care services, cost per child in preschool services. There seems to be a reduction in funding cost per child in preschool services. I am seeking some clarification around that. In 2012-13 it was \$8,592 per child and budgeted for 2014-15 is \$7,965.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am told that the cost per child related to a reduction of funding mainly related to the universal access funding ceasing. I spoke to you just a while ago about going back to 12 hours if we do not get that funding, that \$30 million.

Mr BELL: Right.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I can also tell you I have received advice about your previous query, the increase in sales of goods and services in 2013-14 is due to a payment by the registration board to DECD for salaries paid by DECD on their behalf.

Mr BELL: Thank you very much for that minister.

The CHAIR: Thank you, minister. We will move on now to the department's administered items.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr P. Claridge, Registrar, Non Government Schools, Education and Early Childhood Services Registration and Standards Board.

Dr N. McGoran, Chief Executive, SACE Board of South Australia.

Ms J. Riedstra, Deputy Chief Executive, Department for Education and Child Development.

Mr B. Temperly, Executive Director, Strategy and Performance, Department for Education and Child Development.

Mr C. Bernardi, Chief Financial Officer, Department for Education and Child Development.

The CHAIR: Minister, do you have an opening statement for this particular session?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, I am happy to forgo the opening statement.

The CHAIR: The member for Unley.

Mr PISONI: I refer to page 40, non-government schools.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Page 40 of what?

The CHAIR: Agency Statement, Volume 2?

Mr PISONI: Yes, Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, the one we have been referring to most of the day. Has the CE been replaced at the Office of Non Government Schools?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We have an acting CE.

Mr PISONI: You have an acting CE. Did the termination of Jan Andrews lead to any legal—

The CHAIR: Member for Unley, that does not really relate to the administered items, does it?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, it does.

Mr PISONI: It does.

The CHAIR: Sorry, I beg your pardon.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: You have made statements in the parliament before that were incorrect in relation to Ms Andrews, and that one is incorrect as well. Ms Andrews' contract was not renewed.

Mr PISONI: No, that is not the question I asked.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: She was not terminated; she was not terminated. What you do is put assertions in your questions. You put incorrect assertions in your questions.

Mr PISONI: I rang Jan Andrews. She was due to finish in December and she was terminated in October.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: You put incorrect assertions in your questions and then say I have confirmed them, which is what you did in the parliament and you had to go and retract it.

Mr PISONI: My question is, were there legal costs incurred by the department with the cessation of services from Jan Andrews, and what were those legal costs?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: My advice is no.

Mr PISONI: Did Mr Harrison provide an apology to Jan Andrews for comments he made in the media?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Mr Harrison, as I understand it, wrote to Ms Andrews and apologised if she had interpreted his comments to mean that her contract had ceased owing to disciplinary action because that was not the case.

Mr PISONI: Were there legal costs incurred in the development of that apology or the negotiations? You have already told the parliament 'no'.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Well then why do you ask again?

Mr PISONI: I am asking you to confirm it.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I understand there was a small amount provided to Ms Andrews to cover her costs.

Mr PISONI: So you did not know anything about this until now? Is that what you are telling me? Is that what you are telling the committee; that you knew nothing about this until I raised it in the estimates committee?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: What I am telling you is that there are certain things that the chief executive deals with that are his responsibility. The hiring and firing of staff in the department is his responsibility and he handled it appropriately. He had a person on contract who he was not renewing. That person sought some advice, and to ensure that she was not disadvantaged he covered those costs.

Mr PISONI: I would have thought that that would have been of interest to the media—to the minister.

The CHAIR: That is not really a question, member for Unley.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: That would be right. That would be right. That is exactly what you are after. All you ever do is look for a headline. There is nothing in anything you do that is ever—

Mr BELL: Point of order, sir.

The CHAIR: Hang on, the member for Mount Gambier has a point of order. I do not know what it will be.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: You are a disgrace. You are a disgrace.

The CHAIR: Order, minister!

Mr PISONI: You were not told about the closure of the Aboriginal centre either.

The CHAIR: Member for Unley! Actually there is a point of order from the member for Mount Gambier.

Mr BELL: I think you have dealt with it.

The CHAIR: I have dealt with it. Excellent. The member for Giles has a question.

Mr HUGHES: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 12, Administered items, dot point 1, operation of the SACE Board. Can the minister outline the improvements to SACE Board ICT services?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, I can. In 2012, following an evaluation of the new SACE, the state government allocated an additional \$7.6 million over five years to continue to enhance the certificate. A significant portion of this funding is being used to implement digital and online innovations aimed at streamlining the workflow between the SACE Board and schools.

These initiatives include introduction of subject mini-sites for all SACE subjects providing teachers with all the information they need to understand, plan, teach and assess their subject; introduction of electronic submission of SACE school assessment results; introduction of an improved and expanded IT application to manage student enrolments and SACE assessment data more efficiently; introduction of a SACE data warehouse in 2015 to tailor data and information for schools to monitor trends and help identify further strategies for improving student outcomes; and implementation of system changes to accommodate the introduction of a 90-credit university aggregate for university entry in 2016.

The state government is absolutely committed to working with the SACE Board to meet the board's long-term IT requirements. Planning for the next phase of ICT improvements is well underway so it is disappointing that again the member for Unley could not curb his desire for an

attack on the government. If he had taken one moment to reflect on why these reports were produced, he would have realised we needed to identify the holes in the SACE Board's ICT capability before being able to make further improvements. But the member for Unley is not the reflecting sort. Like some sort of political vampire, I am sure that when he looks in the mirror he does not see anything. The member for Unley might also have asked for a briefing on this matter. I do understand why he did—

The CHAIR: Minister, there is a point of order from the member for Unley.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: —because he probably would not have turned up like he did last time.

Mr PISONI: It is unparliamentary to call members animals.

The CHAIR: I suspect it is unparliamentary. Well, I do not know. Is a vampire an animal? We might have to—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It is not but I do withdraw.

The CHAIR: You do withdraw; thank you, minister, I appreciate that.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am finished. I could have offered him a briefing but we have done that before and he does not turn up, his media commitments are such that he cannot turn up for the briefings he requests.

Mr PISONI: Point of order.

The CHAIR: You have a point of order?

Mr PISONI: I asked the minister for three briefings last year and they were refused.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: You had an appointment and you did not turn up. You had to do your media grab.

Mr PISONI: They were refused.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Isn't that right?

Mr PISONI: No, the briefings were refused by the minister's office.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Isn't that right? You had a briefing and you did not turn up, you had to do media instead. You had to turn up, didn't you?

Mr PISONI: Mark Harvey was convicted of sex offences in your school, and that is why I did the media, minister.

The CHAIR: Member for Unley! The member for Giles is being so patient.

Mr PISONI: You had a paedophile in your schools, and that is why I did the media.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, sure, that made a difference—grab a headline.

The CHAIR: The member for Unley! The member for Giles has a question. I may give him all the questions now, but he has at least one.

Mr HUGHES: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 20, Administered Items, paragraph 2, Achievement of the South Australian Certificate of Education. Can the minister advise whether the research project will continue to be a compulsory element of the South Australian Certificate of Education? If so, why has there been a concern that students have been prevented from opting to study a language?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The research project is one of the most important subjects in the SACE. It helps students hone their ability to be self-motivated, to question and plan, evaluate and make judgements, and innovate and solve problems—skills that will help young people succeed in tertiary study at work and in life. This type of learning is at the forefront of educational practice in leading jurisdictions around the world and precisely why it is a compulsory element of the achievement of the South Australian Certificate of Education.

For example, the Singapore Examinations and Assessment Board requires all year 12 students to undertake project work, a full-year subject similar to the research project. The International Baccalaureate organisation requires all its students to complete the extended essay as part of its diploma program. Cambridge International Examinations offers global perspectives as part of its International General Certificate of Secondary Education. The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority recently piloted the introduction of a full-year extended investigation for study at year 12 level. Last year saw the greatest number of students ever achieve a merit in the research project—254. That is more students excelling in skills that will benefit them and our state long into the future.

Under the Liberals' apprenticeship and entrepreneurial policies they took to the election, the research project would be optional, which is a weasel word for 'cut', denying those students who opt out the chance to develop these skills.

Mr PISONI: Point of order, sir. The minister is entering debate.

The CHAIR: 'Entering' is the wrong word. I think we have been in debate all afternoon and we have had a bit of leeway on both sides, so I am going to let the minister go.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The Liberals show that they are out of touch with modern educational approaches and ignorant of the skills young South Australians need to succeed in a complex, rapidly changing world. It is a furphy that the member for Unley continues to perpetuate that studying the research project prevents students from studying five other subjects in year 12. But the member for Unley is stuck in this 1984 world, continuing to believe that ignorance is strength.

The SACE does not specify a maximum number of subjects that students are able to study. Many schools opt to offer the research project to students in year 11 and many students already choose to study five full-year subjects in year 12 as well as the research project. It is also misleading to suggest that the introduction of the new SACE and, by implication, the year 12 research project, has caused a decline in the study of languages. The research project was actually an additional requirement of the SACE. This meant that, rather than studying three subjects, students needed to study three subjects as well as the research project.

The fact that universities changed their entry requirement at the same time as the introduction of the new SACE, moving from an aggregate calculated out of 90 to an aggregate calculated out of 80, may have impacted on students' subject selections. It is incorrect to suggest that the introduction of the new SACE and, by implication, the year 12 research project, has caused a decline in the study of languages.

Let me say that I am highly supportive of the study of languages in high school and that studying a foreign language remains compulsory until a student finishes year 8. Within the SACE, students can study any language offered at a senior secondary level in Australia, currently more than 38 language subjects.

Next year, university entry requirements are changing again, returning to an aggregate calculated out of 90. This aggregate will be calculated using a student's best 90 credits of tertiary admission subjects. Sixty credits will come from three 20-credit subjects. The remaining 30 credits could come from a 20-credit subject and half of another 20-credit subject, a 20-credit subject and a 10-credit subject (such as the research project, which is a 10-credit subject) or three 10-credit subjects, which might include the research project, a music subject and a language.

The universities will provide up to four bonus points to students undertaking a language other than English in combination with a maths subject under the SA Language, Literacy and Mathematics Bonus Points Scheme in 2015. These changes may result in renewed interest in the study of languages at stage 2 level. I would like to hand over to the chief executive of the SACE Board to provide members with some additional points about the research project which you may find of interest.

Dr McGORAN: I would like to explain why the research project is a compulsory subject of the SACE. To appreciate this, we must first stop and consider this: what is the state's vision for young people who graduate from school with a SACE? That vision is as follows: graduates will be literate

and numerate, they will have met high academic standards and they will be empowered learners with a set of transferable skills that can be applied to learning in any context at any time.

For this vision to be achieved, the SACE Board has the responsibility to certify that students have met this vision. Therefore the SACE Board must ensure that these things are valued, taught, assessed and certified. That is why we have compulsory literacy and numeracy subjects. That is why we expect all students to achieve passing grades in at least 60 credits of stage 2 subjects and that is why we must have a subject that enables the SACE Board to assess and certify whether a student is an empowered learner. That subject is the research project. Otherwise, how can the state's vision be achieved?

What does it mean to be an empowered learner? An empowered learner is someone who can direct their own learning, plan and manage a project that achieves an outcome within a time line, critically think and problem solve, evaluate their learning and evaluate themselves as a learner. Those skills make someone an empowered learner because those skills are transferable to any context, any subject, any place and any time. Surely, every young person in this state is entitled to possess those skills.

I would suggest that if we gathered together a random group of parents and asked them whether they wanted their child to be an empowered learner, they would say yes. Imagine asking them this question: do you want your child to be a self-directed learner who can plan and manage a project that achieves an outcome within a time line? Do you want your child to be able to critically think and problem solve? Do you want your child to be able to evaluate learning and do you want your child to evaluate himself or herself as a learner? Imagine asking parents to put their hand up if this is what they want for their son or daughter. Of course, all the hands would go up because every young person is entitled to be an empowered learner.

Imagine also if we asked them this question: would you like to leave the learning of these skills to chance—that is, hope for the best that your son or daughter chooses the right subjects or pathway or pattern of study—or do you expect those skills to be valued, taught, assessed and certified? Do you want to know, through the achievement of the SACE, that your son or daughter possesses all those skills as well as literacy and numeracy and high academic standards?

Of course, parents expect them to be assessed and certified, valued and taught. They expect the SACE to mean that their children are empowered learners. They expect the SACE to mean that their children have met high academic standards and they expect the SACE to mean that their children are literate and numerate. The skills of planning and managing a project that achieves an outcome within a time line, critical thinking, problem-solving and evaluation are essential for every young person today because they are skills for living, working and learning.

What I have outlined so far is that the state has a vision for learning that requires SACE graduates to be literate and numerate, to meet high academic standards and to be empowered learners. This means that the SACE Board must ensure that all things associated with being an empowered learner are valued, taught, assessed and certified. It also means that you can only get the SACE if you are all these things. This speaks to the credibility of the SACE as a valuable 21st century qualification. So then, how does the SACE Board ensure that every young person is an empowered learner? By making the research project a compulsory element of the SACE.

The CHAIR: Has the minister finished her answer?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Can I take the opportunity to clarify some information for the member for Unley. He asked me a question earlier today about a regional school that never gained parent accreditation for a homestay and I have an answer for the member for Unley.

The member for Unley may not be aware of the distinction the department makes between billeting and international homestay families. Homestay families host international students and are required to gain accreditation from the department's International Education Service. The IES accommodation officers recruit and accredit families for the international student program.

In relation to billeting students, host families may provide accommodation to students who visit another school, for example for a sporting exchange. The DECD Camps and Excursions Guidelines 2007 clearly states that it is the responsibility of the schools to ensure that host families

providing accommodation for billeting students are safe and impose no risk to their safety. This includes all host family members over the age of 18 having a DCSI screening clearance. If the member for Unley has more specific information relating to a specific school, I am happy to follow it up in more detail.

The CHAIR: There was a supplementary to the earlier question. I also want to give the member for Schubert an opportunity to do his omnibus questions.

Mr PISONI: I just refer to the Cossey review evaluation in July 2012 where he writes that there is a significant reduction in the number of schools now offering certain subjects in stage 2 which will impact on the availability of experienced teachers specialising in these subjects who will be available to teach these subjects in future years. There is also a graph in that review that compares the reduction of the number of schools offering certain subjects from 2010 to 2011. It says that there is a 69 per cent reduction from 2010 to 2011, with 43 fewer schools offering geography, 32 fewer schools offering tourism, 21 fewer schools offering society and culture, 17 fewer schools offering legal studies, psychology—

The CHAIR: Sorry, what was the question?

Mr PISONI: I would just like to get this on the record.

The CHAIR: You can always seek leave to insert it, if you like. I just want to give you an opportunity before 4.15pm.

Mr PISONI: You have not ruled on that.

The CHAIR: Sorry?

Mr PISONI: Does that mean my table this morning has been inserted into *Hansard*?

The CHAIR: Actually, yes, it can be. I just ruled on it and yes it can.

Mr PISONI: I seek leave to have the table inserted into *Hansard*.

The CHAIR: If it is statistical information and if its provenance is clear.

Mr PISONI: It is statistical information, yes.

Subject	Fewer Selections	% Reduction Relative to 2010	Fewer Schools Offering
Geography	723	69	43
Tourism	897	55	32
Society and Culture	771	48	21
Legal Studies	450	40	17
Psychology	709	31	1
Modern History	495	31	26
Physical Education	605	21	30
Food and Hospitality	418	18	---
Child Studies	264	18	10
English Communications	1,320	18	4
Biology	398	11	21

Mr PISONI: The question is, minister, and you might have to come back obviously because we are inserting it into *Hansard*, but can you give an update of those figures based on 2013.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: What I can tell you very briefly, and I have not grabbed my folder to look up the numbers, but I know that we had record numbers of children completing their SACE in 2013. We had record numbers of children getting merit certificates and getting honours in their SACE. We are investing in specialist schools. We announced at the last election that we would provide money for advanced manufacturing at Seaview High, The Heights High School will become a defence industry school and Hamilton College will also have—

Mr PISONI: Point of order, sir. The minister ran through this earlier in this process. This is a repetition.

The CHAIR: She is trying to answer your question, I think.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Enrolments in year 12 maths, English, science and business subjects have remained very strong. The students themselves make choices about their learning that align with their interests, abilities and options for further education and employment, so changes to enrolment patterns over time reflect those choices.

Enrolments in year 12 maths, English, science and business subjects remained strong in 2013 from 2012. Significantly more students studied vocational education and training courses as part of their SACE in 2013. There was a 9.3 per cent increase overall, with 41.1 per cent of SACE completers, including some VET, compared with 37.6 per cent in 2012. Higher enrolments in VET courses is likely to mean lower subject enrolments.

Enrolments in some arts, humanities and language subjects decreased in 2013 compared to 2012. For example, compared with the 2012 school year for full year subjects in 2013, arts subjects decreased 4 per cent in 2011-12 and decreased a further 9 per cent in 2013. Business enterprise and technology had a 10 per cent increase from 2011 to 2012; they remained strong with a tiny decrease in 2013. Having increased 4 per cent to 2012, enrolments in English subjects were steady with a—

Mr PISONI: Point of order, sir. Can I suggest that these figures be inserted into *Hansard*, as you quite rightly suggested my figures be?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We do not have it in a table form; I just have it in written form.

The CHAIR: That is right; it needs to be said.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Do you want me to create a table, sir?

The CHAIR: No; I am agreeing with you, minister. I am saying that you cannot insert it.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Okay; I do not have in a table. Health and PE, after increasing by 6 per cent in 2012 was steady with, again, a tiny increase in 2013. Humanities fluctuates from year to year. It increased by 13 per cent in 2012 and in 2013 there was a 7 per cent decrease. Languages, following a 13 per cent decrease from 2011 to 2012, decreased further by 9 per cent in 2013. Enrolments in some languages were steady or slightly increased; there were some increases in areas like Spanish and Vietnamese, and enrolments in others continued to decline. Mathematics remained popular with no change, and science enrolments remained strong with a 1 per cent increase in 2013 after a decrease in 2012. I hope that helps the member for Unley.

The CHAIR: I think it was very helpful. The member for Schubert will need to read out his omnibus questions now, lest we run out of time.

Mr KNOLL: The omnibus questions are:

1. Will the minister provide a detailed breakdown of expenditure on consultants and contractors above \$10,000 in the 2013-14 year for all departments and agencies reporting to the minister, listing the name of the consultant, contractor or service supplier, cost, work undertaken and method of appointment?

2. For each department or agency reporting to the minister in 2013-14, please provide the number of public servants broken down into heads and FTEs that are (1) tenured and (2) on contract and, for each category, provide a breakdown of the number of (1) executives and (2) non-executives.

3. In the financial year 2013-14, for all departments and agencies reporting to the minister, what underspending on projects and programs (1) was and (2) was not approved by cabinet for carryover expenditure in 2014-15?

4. Between 30 June 2013 and 30 June 2014, will the minister list the job title and total employment cost of each position with a total estimated cost of \$100,000 or more—(a) which has been abolished and (b) which has been created?

5. For each year of the forward estimates, provide the name and budget of all grant programs administered by all departments and agencies reporting to the minister and, for 2013-14, provide a breakdown of expenditure on all grants administered by all departments and agencies reporting to the minister listing the name of the grant recipient, the amount of the grant and the purpose of the grants and whether the grant was subject to a grant agreement as required by Treasurer's Instruction 15.

6. For each department or agency reporting to the minister, what is the budget for targeted voluntary separation packages for the financial years 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17 and 2017-18?

7. What is the title and total employment cost of each individual staff member in the minister's office as at 30 June 2014, including all departmental employees seconded to ministerial offices and ministerial liaison officers?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Can I just seek some clarification from the member for Schubert? When you refer to grants, are you talking about unencumbered grants or are you talking about service agreements?

Mr PISONI: All grants.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Well, service agreements are service agreements. Are you talking about service agreements that we would have with an agency, that we are paying them to provide a service, or are you talking about a grant like we would have made to parent organisations, for example?

Mr PISONI: We are talking about those grants but we will take those service agreements as well.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am just seeking clarity.

Mr PISONI: If you are offering them, we will have them. Thank you.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes. It is his question, not your question.

Mr KNOLL: I am happy to restate the question, if the minister wishes. I am happy to include service agreements as well.

The CHAIR: Excellent. I am glad we got to the bottom of that. There being no further questions, I declare the examination of the proposed payments for the Department for Education and Child Development and administered items for the Department for Education and Child Development completed. Thank you, minister, and thank you to your advisers and officials.

At 16:16 the committee adjourned until Monday 21 July 2014 at 10:30.