

**HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY****Thursday, 25 July 2019****ESTIMATES COMMITTEE B****Chair:**

Mr S.J. Duluk

**Members:**

Mr B.I. Boyer  
Dr S.E. Close  
Mr M.J. Cowdrey  
Mr F.J. Ellis  
Mr P.N. McBride  
Ms D.J. Wortley

*The committee met at 09:00**Estimates Vote***DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION, \$3,365,421,000****ADMINISTERED ITEMS FOR THE DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION, \$325,068,000****Minister:**

Hon. J.A.W. Gardner, Minister for Education.

**Departmental Advisers:**

Mr R. Persse, Chief Executive, Department for Education.

Ms J. Riedstra, Chief Operating Officer, Department for Education.

Mr B. Temperly, Executive Director, System Performance, Department for Education.

Ms S. Cameron, Executive Director, Learning Improvement, Department for Education.

Mr C. Vetere, Director, Budget and Finance, Department for Education.

Ms C. Croser-Barlow, Project Director, Year 7 to High School, Department for Education.

**The CHAIR:** Good morning. The estimates committee is a relatively informal procedure and, as such, there is no need to stand to ask questions. I understand that the minister and the lead speaker for the opposition have agreed to an approximate time for the consideration of proposed payments, which will facilitate a change of departmental advisers. Can the minister and the lead speaker for the opposition confirm that the timetable for today's proceedings previously distributed is accurate.

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

**Dr CLOSE:** Yes.

**The CHAIR:** Changes to committee membership will be notified as they occur. Members should ensure that the Chair is provided with a completed request to be discharged form. If the

minister undertakes to supply information at a later date, it must be submitted to the Clerk Assistant via the answers to questions mailbox no later than Friday 5 September 2019.

I propose to allow the minister and the lead speaker for the opposition to make opening statements of about 10 minutes each, should they wish. There will be a flexible approach to giving the call to ask questions based on about three questions per member, alternating each side. Supplementary questions will be the exception rather than the rule.

A member not on the committee may ask a question at the discretion of the Chair. Questions must be based on lines of expenditure in the budget papers and must be identifiable or referenced. Members unable to complete their questions during proceedings may submit them as questions on notice for inclusion in the assembly *Notice Paper*.

There is no formal facility for the tabling of documents before the committee; however, documents can be supplied to the Chair for distribution to the committee. The incorporation of material in *Hansard* is permitted on the same basis as applies in the house, that is, that it is purely statistical and limited to one page in length.

All questions are to be directed to the minister, not the minister's advisers. I will be quite hot on that. The minister may refer questions to advisers for a response. The committee's examination will be broadcast in the same manner as sittings of the house are broadcast, that is, through the IPTV system within Parliament House via the webstream link to the internet and the Parliament of South Australia video-on-demand broadcast system.

I will now proceed to open the following lines of examination: the Department for Education and administered items of the Department for Education. The minister appearing before us today is the Minister for Education. I declare the proposed payments open for examination and refer members to the Agency Statements, Volume 1. Minister, could you please introduce your advisers and make an opening statement if you so wish.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** On my right is Rick Persse, Chief Executive of the Department for Education. On my left is Julieann Riedstra, Chief Operating Officer of the Department for Education. Behind me are Ben Temperly, Executive Director, System Performance; Carmine Vetere, Director, Budget and Finance—Chris Bernardi sends his regards from his holiday—Susan Cameron, Executive Director, Learning Improvement; and Caroline Croser-Barlow, Project Director, Year 7 to High School project. There are several other senior executives of the department not too far away if the shadow minister or opposition has questions on other related matters.

I will not make a lengthy opening statement other than to say that it continues to be an absolute privilege and an honour to have this role, and I am pleased to be able to spend some time this morning in this committee with this group of seven other MPs. Each one of you seven are people who regularly contact me about schools in your electorates, so I know that you care about this area very much—not to cast any aspersions on the four who have left. This is obviously a very important area of public policy which impacts upon both our present wellbeing and our future prosperity as a state.

**The CHAIR:** Member for Port Adelaide.

**Dr CLOSE:** I do not have an opening statement, other than to thank the people who have come along today to assist the minister.

**The CHAIR:** Straight to questions, thank you.

**Dr CLOSE:** My first question is from Budget Paper 5, page 28—the Budget Measures, essentially. I would like to confirm, over both page 28 and page 29, that the only new money being spent or coming into the department other than for investing purposes, capital purposes, relates to funding for some exemptions for the 457 visa holders who are in regions from having to pay any school fees, even if their salary is over the average; is that correct?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** There are a couple of standing items in the understanding between Treasury and the education department that determine funding increases. One of them, as the member is aware, is enrolments. There is also the national school funding reform agreement, which was signed late last year, which the member may recall saw us putting an extra \$700 million

over the next decade into public schooling in terms of the way that that operates, and then there is the measure the member has identified.

Previously, in last year's budget papers, obviously there was also further new money in the year 7 to high school shift as the funding for a high school student, according to our national agreements and our state's expectations, is based on a higher level if they are in a high school rather than a primary school. In addition, obviously there is also the extra infrastructure spend.

**Dr CLOSE:** When it comes to the additional money that comes into the budget for the 2021-22 year—the 2022 bit of it for year 7, because that is when year 7 starts—does that money include the money that will be provided to the other sectors in South Australia: the Catholics and the independents?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** It does, but I make the point that it is an estimate at this stage. Obviously, the level of that money changes fairly significantly as the proportions of students in each sector change as well. So obviously, when there is a significant increase in public school enrolments, the state government is responsible for the overwhelming majority of that funding. When students are in non-government schools, the commonwealth government is the overwhelming government funder for those students. The mix of that has been varying quite significantly in recent years, and so it is the best estimate at the moment. I think \$40 million per year was the ongoing cost estimated in last year's budget papers.

**Dr CLOSE:** It was \$44 million, I think.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** It may be more than that.

**Dr CLOSE:** I understand. Back to page 28, at the top there is \$48 million in savings that are being anticipated to be delivered—\$12 million a year. Can the minister speak to where that is likely to come from, including the proportion that will come from FTEs and which particular areas within the department might be quarantined from having to deliver a saving to contribute to that \$12 million a year?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** We are continuing to work through some of the options there. Obviously, salary harvesting is something that has traditionally been a savings measure available to the education department and will continue to be so. We would not expect that to be the only measure necessary, but certainly in the past that has been a measure that has been used.

I make the point that these are efficiencies in the context of efficiencies that have been applied to the department and continue to be applied to the department from previous budgets. There were some in last year's budget. They are dwarfed by the efficiencies left to us by the former government, particularly the 2017 Mid-Year Budget Review. The 2017 Mid-Year Budget Review cabinet meetings must have been an interesting time for the shadow minister, I am sure, because the former government left us very significant savings which they thought were reasonable. It is a large department, and so there are efficiencies that can be made.

The member asked for examples. I am advised we are looking for procurement efficiencies via contract renegotiations. We have vacated two floors in the Education Centre. Some of these things have already happened; some of them are things that may yet happen, and we may be open to looking at other ideas. I do not want to try to suggest that it is just a snap of the fingers and it can be done, but I know that the shadow minister has great confidence in us to do this because she went to the election as the minister with a much greater savings task that she felt she could make.

**Dr CLOSE:** To which you have added. The Learning Improvement Division is having a review at present, I understand. Is it conceivable that that review will aid in making a decision to make savings in learning improvement?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** As the review was commissioned on the chief executive's direction, I might invite the chief executive to reflect on that.

**Mr PERSSE:** The review that we commissioned for learning improvement was around making sure that we had the best, most contemporary support for curriculum support. I can absolutely confirm that savings was not an objective of that. We have a draft report in at the moment, which we are considering, and there is a meeting scheduled with the panel of reviewers that will happen in the

next couple of weeks. I would expect that there will be some impacts on the structure and how we organise the Learning Improvement Division, but at this point we are really more talking about what services and support we can provide through LID to schools.

**Dr CLOSE:** Is the HR support that is provided to principals going to be quarantined from any savings?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I believe I have some information on that. I can advise this is an important area. This is an area where, of course, principals, for a number of years, would complain to me and my predecessors as shadow ministers—and I am sure that that feedback was heard by the member for Port Adelaide as the minister—that the department's support to them in dealing with unsatisfactory performance on school sites or other HR matters was not everything that they would have liked it to be. So there were some reforms undertaken a couple of years ago which have had a fairly significant impact on improving the work the department has done. I think they were nominated for a Public Education Award last year for the support role that they play. This government values that.

I can advise that the department has provided additional funding to continue and expand support to leaders to manage unsatisfactory performance. The funding will incrementally increase until the end of the financial year 2020-21, according to the advice that I have. The new funding has allowed existing staff, initially funded through the commonwealth's independent public schools performance management program initiative, to continue.

It has provided three additional staff to date to directly support leaders in the management of unsatisfactory performance and non-compensable health issues, it has enabled existing capacity building programs for school leaders to continue and supported implementation of programs across other sectors—for example, corporate leaders—and it has continued to support a network of trained observers to conduct classroom observations and comment on the teaching skills of those subject to performance management.

An additional function regarding the management of minor misconduct has been incorporated into the unit as a result of the department's 2019 restructure, with the transfer of an ASO5 position from the Incident Management Division. That probably answers the member's question.

**Dr CLOSE:** The program is not in a line within the department for 2022-23, is that what I understand you to say?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** The funding and the program continue; I am just advising that there is an increase in funding coming up to the 2020-21 year.

**Dr CLOSE:** Okay, thank you. Is the Incident Management Division going to be quarantined from savings?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I am advised that one position has been moved out and two positions were reduced last year. We have no further plans to make any further changes there.

**Dr CLOSE:** The last one I would like to ask specifically about is IT support, given NAPLAN Online's adventures. Will that be quarantined from savings?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** We are very excited about the IT support we are giving our schools as we roll out our fibre-optic cable to all of our schools across South Australia. There is a lot of work for that group to do. In addition to the fibre-optic cable to all of our schools and providing our support to schools as they move to NAPLAN Online and SACE online as well, there is also the EMS, the Education Management System, which the member would remember starting the process for. That is a very significant change to IT in our schools and one that it is important we get right. We are looking at ways of having increased automation and increased efficiency, but I am advised and I think I can accurately reflect that there are no plans for any staff cuts in that area.

**The CHAIR:** I might just go to the member for Colton, who I know has been waiting patiently and has many questions to ask, I believe.

**Mr COWDREY:** Very kind of you, Chair. I just have a question for the minister in regard to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 174. Can the minister update the committee on the rollout of the

improved internet infrastructure for South Australian schools, of course including my electorate, or any specific details?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I thank the member for the question; it is an important question. The shadow minister highlighted just a moment ago the critical importance of ensuring that our IT in our schools is as good as it can be. We do know that, up until recently, we have had the slowest internet connection across our state education system of any mainland state, and that is not good enough.

There are too many schools that have been reluctant to engage using the opportunities that the internet provides for pedagogy, for classroom delivery and for professional development because, of course, you can only use these in the classroom if you can rely on it to stay on. When you have situations as have been described to us in too many schools, where a classroom might be using the internet for a project and then all of a sudden it slows down to become unusable because another classroom next door has turned on the internet as well, that is not good enough.

We know that, across Australia, most other states last year had more than 90 per cent of schools attached to fibre-optic cable connections. It is the most reliable, fastest, most scalable form of being able to deliver this service to our schools and it is critically important, of course, that we reach that standard as well. Up until this project started, we were looking at fewer than 30 per cent of our schools in South Australia with that sort of connection.

We are rolling out the best project across South Australia, and I am pleased to say that we are well on the way to doing that. As of today, I am advised that we are ahead of schedule, with 163 sites now connected to the new high-speed fibre service. That is more than 92,000 students and 10,000 educators in schools that have had the service connected.

I am advised that in the member's electorate of Colton, he is already aware that the Fulham North Primary School had the cable laid on 25 February and the Fulham Gardens Primary School on 7 May. This month, the cable has been laid to the Henley High School and, indeed, the West Beach Primary School on 17 July. In the coming weeks, the Kidman Park Primary School is scheduled to be connected in week 4 of term 3. The St Leonards Primary School is scheduled in week 9 of term 3, and Henley Beach Primary School is to be connected in term 4.

This is important for our public education system. I am also pleased to advise that we have enabled connections between Telstra and independent schools, and I understand that a number of independent schools are also in discussion to access some of this infrastructure. Particularly, it will be important in country communities, many of whom do not have such infrastructure at the moment. It will enable Telstra to offer packages to customers in those communities—businesses and potentially personal customers in the future—at a much higher quality than they have had before. We are also glad that other government departments, including potentially hospitals and courts, will benefit from rapidly improved internet speeds.

One IT teacher at Ardrossan Area School, I think it was, reported that the speed since connection is about 2,000 times faster than what they were experiencing before. We were promised that it would be up to 1,000 times faster, so that is good. The speeds will be different in different schools across the state. For the four schools that are regional and remote schools—Kangaroo Island, Leigh Creek, Marree and Oak Valley—they will not have the cable but Telstra has committed to making best efforts to get them an exceptional service as well, and in the near future we hope to formalise what that service will look like.

**Dr CLOSE:** I would now like to turn to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 168. On the second dot point we see a number of priorities that the government has, and languages are mentioned. That prompts me to ask about the arrangements for the ethnic and community languages schools that are housed in public high schools and primary schools at present. Specifically, I am aware that the Port Adelaide Greek School is being kicked out of Seaton heading into the second half of the year when they have some students undertaking SACE, as I understand it. So I would like a specific answer on what kind of assistance is being provided to that school, but more specifically, given the amount of works occurring in schools, on whether there is disruption to other ethnic and community languages schools.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** This is something that the member occasionally might have had approaches from me about when I was the shadow minister, and I know that both of us have high regard for the ethnic schools and the work that they do. I was very pleased in the last 12 months to sign off on an increase to the per capita funding for ethnic schools of, I think it was, \$5 a student, and that was something we were very pleased to be able to do. We will double-check the detail of that.

The member has written to me about the Greek school, and it is something that I have spoken to Darryl Buchanan about, as the person who manages our ethnic schools program. He, on behalf of the department and on behalf of the school, is working with some potential local institutions to assist the Greek school. We have a couple of leads. I do not think they have been finalised yet so I would not want to put them on the hook in estimates when those discussions are taking place, but I am hopeful we can resolve the situation for the Greek school to minimise disruption to students.

This is not something that is new. This is something that can be a challenge for ethnic schools from time to time. Many of them are located as guests of Department for Education schools. Some of them have their own facilities, some of them operate out of community facilities, and some of them operate out of non-government schools as well. While the need that they have is for some classroom space effectively, they do as a general rule like to have their own space. Some of them have their own rooms connected to churches, for example. They do like to have their own space so that they can store their material and have a sense of ownership. In some cases, that is possible and it is done really well, and in some cases it is quite challenging.

From the education department's point of view, we certainly see the value of the ethnic schools. They have an ongoing level of support from the department. We are working with the ethnic schools to increase their capacity to deliver SACE courses where possible. Not all of them are in a position to do that; some of them are more focused on the early primary years. But, where possible, we would like our students to be able to access SACE language courses, and where ethnic schools can help us in delivering that, it is of great benefit.

We will continue to work with all of our ethnic schools where we can to provide them support. I think the member mentioned Seaton High School. I think that the term 'kicked out' is a bit emotive. Seaton High School is in a position obviously where they have their needs as well for their students, and it is entirely reasonable that Seaton High School is able to make decisions that relate to the best use of their facilities but, in that context, we want to work with the ethnic schools to help them to get a good outcome, and I hope that will be the case.

**Dr CLOSE:** Given the works that are being undertaken through Building Better Schools, moving year 7 and the completion of STEM, I wonder if the minister would take on notice where there is an anticipation that there might be issues caused for ethnic schools. That is the case in Seaton. The \$20 million that the previous government indicated they would have is now going to be spent, which is excellent for Seaton, but it has had a knock-on effect. It would be useful to have some advance warning about where that is going to occur elsewhere. If that could be identified I would appreciate it, but I expect that you do not have it with you now.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Let me check. What I can say is that I am fairly certain that there will be, in the annual report if nowhere else, a list of our ethnic schools, and I am hoping that that will include a list of their locations. I believe that is a publicly-available document, and I will check if it is not, and then marrying up that document with where there are infrastructure projects is something that any member of the public can do because, again, there is a list.

The caveat I would put on that, of course, is that some of those projects are happening sooner rather than later, and so if there is some further additional information that would be of benefit to the member, then I will get back to her, but I suspect that most of it is publicly available.

**Dr CLOSE:** If it is not publicly available, you will bring it back to me and otherwise I can go on an FOI journey. I would also like to ask about the reference to VET in that third dot point. What changes have occurred thus far in the way in which our vocational education and training is treated in secondary schools from what had previously occurred, say, the year before or the year before that?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I note that there is a substantial review out at the moment. I encourage the member to keep that in mind because I think that will be an opportunity to substantially improve not just the quality of VET service provision but also the status of vocational education and training. One of our significant opportunities, I think, in this space is to ensure that our teachers, our families, our schools, our students and our community more broadly have a stronger understanding of the significant benefits of VET education, traineeships and apprenticeships. The discussion paper that went out with the review contains a good deal of information that I would encourage all members to read: all members of the community as well as all members of this committee.

In terms of the dot point, it talks about VET Pathways to employment for young people in secondary schools. I would say that that is certainly impacted by the \$200 million Skilling South Australia fund, which is aimed at delivering 20,000 new traineeships and apprenticeships. We are encouraged that our Flexible Apprenticeship pilot at the moment will encourage more young people into apprenticeships or, indeed, traineeships as well.

Can I say that A Fresh Start for TAFE SA, the higher level of confidence that the community sees in TAFE SA as a result of the work that the government has done with it, and the significant new investment in TAFE SA with more than \$100 million reinvested in TAFE SA over and above what was in the budget left to us by those opposite, is significant, too, because I think people do need to have confidence in our major public training provider which, of course, is also the major auspicing provider for VET qualifications in our schools. Is that sufficient?

**Dr CLOSE:** It is, indeed. When will the technical college be announced? I think several schools hoping to be awarded the contract felt that it was going to be by Easter.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I thank the member for the question. Obviously, there has been a range of people involved, and several schools and other bodies involved, in putting forward suggestions. Due diligence is currently being finalised, according to my advice, so I would anticipate that further announcements would not be too far away.

**Dr CLOSE:** When does the minister expect the technical college to be functional, to be operating with students?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I think the best way for me to answer that is to suggest that, with the announcements that are not too far away, we will provide as much information as possible at that time. I could take it on notice but I suggest the information will be publicly available soon enough.

**Dr CLOSE:** If we turn to the next page, page 169, which is the list of some of the capital works occurring in our schools—and I am very happy for this to be taken on notice because of the level of detail—can the minister say which of these schools on the list will require additional space for year 7?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I think most of them, because obviously there is a priority that we are placing on ensuring that all of those that require additional space for year 7s are done by the beginning of the 2022 school year. Of the ones on that list, I will come back to the member. I am advised that that information is actually on the website, broken down by school as to which ones require additional capacity.

**Dr CLOSE:** Again, I am happy for this to be taken on notice. How much will be spent on general learning areas for each of these schools?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** My understanding is that the scope of these projects is a matter that is worked out between each individual school. The money is a combination of general learning areas and specialist learning areas; some of them are providing other facilities as well. I think that it is worth noting that a number of these projects are to have significant increased capacity, not just to enable more year 7s to be able to attend these schools but also to substantially enhance the capacity to enrol students in other year levels, too.

Norwood Morialta High School, for example, obviously there is a question there, because the campus that is being expanded currently hosts fewer than 700 students. So that expansion will enable it to host year 7s, year 8s, year 9s and year 10s who are currently not on that campus. If I am

looking at another one of the schools, Glossop High School is another one where campuses are coming together, so multiple year levels are being supported.

There is a range of schools where the number of extra spaces is substantially over and above just the year 7 contingent coming in. It is worth noting as well that, if we were not doing the year 7 move, a large number of our primary schools would need substantial extra infrastructure. The fact is that there are 20,000 extra students coming into our public school system in the next three years, certainly into our high schools. I believe that a little over half of that is year 7s. But there are expanding pressures on our public school system. More than half is year 7, to be sure, but not just the year 7s.

**Dr CLOSE:** Nonetheless, I would appreciate for each of these a breakdown of what is for general learning and what is for specialised learning areas.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** We will be announcing the scopes of the projects as they become confirmed.

**Dr CLOSE:** I would also like to know how many of these will require additional staff, space or facilities.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I am advised that will be in the scope of the projects when it comes on, but it is fair to say that there are extra staff who come along with extra students.

**Dr CLOSE:** When do you anticipate having those scopes completed, so that I can have access to that information?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** It is a rolling program. I cannot tell the member when the first one will be rolled out at the moment, but I will endeavour to provide some information on our best estimate of that.

**Dr CLOSE:** I note that Seaview High School is not on the list, so I presume it is not spending any money in the 2019-20 budget, but I understand it is having money provided as part of the additional funding for year 7, which is mentioned on page 168, the \$185 million. Seaview is half full at the moment, and I am wondering what it was that prompted the need to spend money on Seaview, given that it is at only half its capacity at present.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Seaview has a rapidly growing student population. I think that there is a significant increase in the proportion of parents who live in the Seaview zone who are choosing it as their school of choice. Actually, I recall getting a letter from a parent who was in the Brighton high school zone not that long ago, asking that they be allowed to have their child go to Seaview because they were very confident in the work that is there.

I believe that Seaview has a \$9 million project. I will be corrected if I am wrong, but also it is one of the schools, and I think there are about 10 of them, that will benefit from a share in the \$56 million that was announced, where we are not tying the money figure to the school, but we are saying that it will get a certain number of increased places. We believe that that will cost \$56 million with a little bit of flex between the schools.

We actually do believe that Seaview, while it has some room at the moment, is rapidly filling to fill that room and will need extra capacity. The reason that it is not listed specifically here is that it is in the other school projects, which are schools that have less than \$10 million identified for the total project costs and of which \$51 million is being spent in the 2019-20 year.

**Dr CLOSE:** Thank you. With Brighton high school, I read in the material that was provided to *The Advertiser* that I think there were 100 net additional students as a result of year 7, although subsequently I think I have seen 150. You are welcome to clarify that, if you like. Either way, why does it need nearly \$14 million?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** At Brighton high school, I think, there will be more than 100 year 7s, but the expansion in capacity is 100. I believe that we—Caroline will correct me if I am mistaken—are reducing the number of international students that they are allowed to take as well, and obviously they will be enforcing their zone potentially more rigorously than they have in the past, while being able to maintain specialist programs at the school. I think that goes some way to clearing up some of the confusion about the 100 figure.



There are going to be 300 students in each year level at Brighton. In terms of the built capacity at the school, we are looking to build to 1,800. It is possible that the school is using some innovative ways to fit some students in at the moment and timetabling and so forth. The other point is that some schools are more expensive to build extra capacity than are other schools. Brighton high school is one where, unless we want to build new buildings over their ovals, the footprint where the classrooms, performing arts spaces and buildings are requires a more complex build than those that have footprints for easier builds.

**Dr CLOSE:** Do you anticipate that \$14 million being spent on the general learning areas for the extra 100 students?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** My understanding is that the approach taken in relation to all of these is that it would be a mix of general learning areas, specialist learning areas, potentially car parks and other things that are necessary. The member mentioned staff spaces before as one of the potential requirements, and that may well be the mix here. Each of the schools will end up with a different mix, depending on their local needs. It may well be that those mixes are exactly in the same proportions as each other, but we are not operating on a one-size-fits-all model. We are operating on the idea that we will get a project that will be suitable for each of those schools, and when we have that detail of Brighton I am sure we will be happy to release it.

**Dr CLOSE:** It is very nice to have \$14 million spent on 100 kids. I wish we could do that everywhere. I understand the reason that the anticipation of increase is only 100 is that there are a number of students out of zone who go to Brighton high school, not just because of specialist music but more generally. Has the agency done any work on the kids who are coming currently? Obviously they will not be thrown out, but their successor students will not be able to go to that school anymore if you are going to manage the increase of a whole year level to being only 100 kids. To which schools will those students then be required to go? For where are they currently zoned? At the moment they are managing to go to Brighton high school. Seaview will be one, but I am wondering if there are others.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** It is a hypothetical question because every year it would be a different answer, depending on the cohort of the families involved, and depending on the schools that they are attracted to. There would be historical stories about which schools kids have been to and which school zones they are choosing not to attend. There has been that choice and flexibility in the past.

Some of those schools the kids are now choosing to go to are very attractive, and we just spent some time talking about Seaview. I suspect Seaview would be the one with the largest number of students traditionally going to Brighton, but there would also be schools all around the metropolitan area with students in zone who are going to Brighton through one of their specialist programs. I think they have volleyball and music; there may well be others. The Brighton Secondary School was the winner of the world Formula 1 in schools competition last year. I think that was a tremendous result, and I thank Corey Wingard, one of the parents at the school and local MP, who helped them in their fundraising.

**Dr CLOSE:** Will you take on notice where students who are not in zone and not in a specialist program are residing at present for historical comparison purposes?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I will see what we can get. To be clear, you are asking what are the geographical locations of students at the moment?

**Dr CLOSE:** Yes.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I make the further point that, once a student is enrolled at a school, we do not force them to leave the school if they move. So the question the member is asking is: in relation to what school would they have been zoned to when they are in year 8, because after that it is no longer relevant. We will definitely get the figure for the ones in year 8 this year, and we will see if anything else is relevant.

**Mr ELLIS:** I have a question originating from Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 174, under the heading highlights, about the fourth dot point down. I wonder whether the minister might update the committee on the phonics screening check project.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I thank the member for the question. It is a very important question. It is something that everyone in the room can be proud of, that South Australia is leading the nation in this work. The phonics screening check is one important element of the government's Literacy Guarantee policy, which we took to the election. It is not a silver bullet that is going to solve all our problems, but it is a very important and useful tool to help teachers in classrooms to help us focus our system on the things that are going to get our kids to have the best chance of being able to read, which is so important to their later development in life and in education.

Children, of course, start school with a wide range of knowledge, skills and understandings relating to reading. A good grasp of phonics, we know, is an essential skill that students require when learning to read and write. It is something that is helpful for some students and absolutely essential for others. This is particularly of concern to families of students with dyslexia and other learning difficulties. We know that the best way to teach those students to read is through ensuring they have a strong grasp of phonics, and it is helpful for all students.

The phonics screening check is designed to ensure that all our students acquire that strong foundation in the essential aspects of literacy. Teachers will analyse the results of the phonics screening check, and they plan specific interventions for those students who are seen to need it, based on their performance during the check.

It is important that this is done in year 1. One of the challenges is, of course, that the reading that some students do in the early years is based on a lot of repetition, pictures giving clues to the words on the page, and so a lot of smart kids who are struggling with their reading are able to appear as if they are doing well through guessing or sheer memory of how some words look. Phonics is the key that gives them the opportunity to decode what those words look like, so that when they encounter a word they have not seen before, a more complex word, it helps them to decode what that word is, they can say it out loud and then be able to recognise it.

The check helps us to identify those kids. One of the things that I found particularly interesting through the rollout of the check is that a lot of teachers and a number of principals were sceptical about it. Some welcomed it, and pretty much everybody that I have spoken to has found it to be a better experience than they thought. Some thought that it was going to be great and found it to be great. Some were sceptical and found it to be pretty useful.

A trial was undertaken when the shadow minister for education was the minister in 2017. It was trialled in 50 schools in reception and year 1. Anne Bayetto and her team at Flinders University did some research. They found that it was useful. It was welcomed by teachers and the students. They enjoyed the one-on-one time and the program was worthwhile, particularly for year 1s, which is why we have rolled it out for those year 1s.

In 2018, 13,817 year 1 students from 432 schools actively participated in the screening check. Schools were supported with TRT days, one for the professional development of principals and teachers, who were administering the check, one for the check to be able to be administered in classes, so that the teacher would have that one-on-one time without having to juggle it with other duties at the same time, and one to enable the teachers to plan interventions for students as necessary.

A total of 5,951 of our year 1 students (43 per cent) showed that they met the expected achievement by correctly decoding 28 words or more out of 40, and we would like to see that improve in the years ahead. The good news is that when this was undertaken in the UK, over a series of years, the phonics screening check outcomes saw significant improvement over that time as teachers became more and more familiar with how to integrate teaching of phonics into the work that they were doing. A lot of teachers went to uni when phonics was not even part of the teacher training course at university, and that is increasingly becoming an important part of what our universities are offering.

We do expect to see improvement in the years ahead. We certainly hope that will be the case. In 2019, the phonics screening check will be implemented with every year 1 student in a government school during term 3 over a period of four weeks in August, and face-to-face professional learning for more than 1,400 year 1 teachers is currently underway and will continue into early term 3. For teachers who have not administered the check, they will obviously have the opportunity to

participate in that introductory course. For teachers who have done it before, we are looking at more advanced PD opportunities for them so that they find it useful.

Schools are receiving release time to support year 1 teachers to attend that professional learning face to face, to administer the screening check and to respond to the results. As we did last year, in 2019 the phonics screening check materials will again be made available to other schooling sectors for their potential use. Schools are also being supported with online materials to guide them in interpreting students' performance on the phonics screening check and responding with appropriate interventions.

These materials have been developed in consultation with the Australian Council for Educational Research. South Australia, as I said, is leading the nation. I am grateful for the support from the opposition for doing this and I am grateful for the work that the member for Port Adelaide did as the minister for education in staring down the opponents of the phonics screening check and ensuring that a trial was available to take place, which I think is positioning our system, our schools and, most importantly, our children well for the future.

**Ms BEDFORD:** I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 175 about departmental music. I ask the minister to report on the effectiveness and success of changes to music in schools to date and, as part of the new Music Education Strategy, have any gaps been identified for improvement?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I am happy to talk in general about the Music Education Strategy. The specific questions I heard from the member were to do with new initiatives and whether any gaps have been identified?

**Ms BEDFORD:** Are the new initiatives part of a new push or looking to support any gaps that have been identified in music since the changes were made?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** There are several iterations of this, and obviously music in our schools is supported on a number of levels. Some schools choose to have a music teacher. There is a significant instrumental music service which operates in a number of schools with a large number of staff. They support group work in music and ensembles and bands, and I think more individual work in the senior years. Then there are also schools that make the decision to take on hourly paid instructors. There are also schools that allow private music instructors to come into the school. All that work is historical.

There were some changes to the way that music focus schools were organised in the last couple of years of the former government, and that structure that was put in place several years ago continues at the moment. In addition to that we have the new Music Education Strategy, which is providing some further opportunities for schools. Maybe if I can outline some of the broad things that are in the new Music Education Strategy, and I am happy to go into further detail as needed or take detailed questions on notice.

The Music Education Strategy was released in November 2018. It is a 10-year aspiration—2019 to 2029—with a focus on ensuring that all children and young people in South Australia have access to quality music education and, particularly, I think the member asked about gaps. One of the things we were concerned about is that, with the list of different ways in which music is made available as part of education for our schools, whether that is having a dedicated music teacher, having engagement with instrumental hourly paid instructors or private music instructors, there are schools in South Australia that do not have any of those opportunities. We would like to see their students have the opportunity to have music education as part of their education going through school. That is something that we believe we need to do to ensure every school is given the benefit and the opportunity to fulfil their potential.

The strategy has \$7 million of targeted investment over the coming four years to enhance existing systems, build capacity and provide better support for general classroom music education. That is particularly important in those schools, particularly small schools and maybe remote schools, that do not have a music teacher. We are looking to upskill non-specialist teachers and educators to improve the delivery of general classroom music education and provide curriculum and pedagogy resources, with a particular focus on primary schools.

Since the launch of the strategy, the department has developed, refined and progressed the implementation plan for the strategy, with the rollout of the initiatives being phased over the four-year funding cycle. Mr Nick Birch, who was the assistant principal—he certainly was, I think he has now started his new role—and the head of music from Playford International College, which is one of our schools with a great reputation for music, has been recruited as a dedicated manager following a nationwide search. I think it is to the credit of music educators in South Australia that that nationwide search found the best person for the job right here in South Australia—

**Ms BEDFORD:** I am not surprised.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** —and, indeed, in the public education system. I think the member for Florey's comfort and confidence in that is absolutely justified. Nick has had more than 13 years of professional music education experience as well as demonstrated leadership in strategic planning and implementation of various music programs and initiatives.

A Music Education Strategy advisory panel has been established to provide strategic advice and direction to the department regarding the implementation of strategy initiatives. Many of these people, of course, helped us in the development of the initial strategy. We are privileged to have a cross-section of internal and external music and education leaders, including Dr Anita Collins, who is a neuro-musical educator; Professor Graeme Koehne, AO, a director of the Elder Conservatorium of Music; Mr Vince Ciccarello, the managing director of the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra; and Dr Jennifer Rosevear, AM, who is a visiting research fellow at the Elder Conservatorium and the representative nominated by the Australian Society for Music Education, South Australian chapter.

In the coming financial year, we are expecting nearly \$3 million to improve the delivery of music education through two funding rounds of the Music Innovation Fund. I think the first one of those closed a couple of weeks ago, so we will be looking to make announcements in the not-too-distant future about that first group of grants under that fund. We will have four music education experts working with networks of schools and preschools, and they are developing, supporting and embedding the vision, goals and initiatives of the strategy into classrooms and discipline-specific music education, as well as wider community awareness.

I think one of the things that is really valuable here—as I spoke about VET earlier, I think it is also important that, for music education, families and communities have an understanding of the benefits to students of having music education. We know that it benefits their broader academic development as well. If they want to be a musician, that is great, but if they want to be any other number of things in life, having a strong sense of music in their education helps them in that, too.

The \$3 million is also going towards development of music teaching and learning resources, so we are looking forward to having them completed and being able to be released, and to providing some new professional development opportunities in music education for teachers. I could go on but I will not. I suspect the member has asked previously about IMS staff levels.

**Ms BEDFORD:** I was just going to ask you: have there been any staff losses in the IMS branch?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I can provide information, as it happens. The instrumental music budget comprises 84.5 FTE staff, including leaders, teachers and administration staff. Within that 84.5 FTE there is provision for 10.4 FTE leadership and administration staff and 74.1 FTE instrumental music teachers. That number can vary throughout the year. The total instrumental music budget for 2019-20 is \$11,749,000.

**Ms BEDFORD:** The next question would be: how are you measuring the standard and quality of music instruction in the schools? There is a wide variance that I have observed locally of people coming into the schools. I just want to know how you are measuring it and what the outcome of that is.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** We do not have a NAPLAN standardised test for music, obviously, and I do not think—

**Ms BEDFORD:** That is not what I am referring to.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** —the member is suggesting that or anything else. The member asked about the quality of music instruction, and the member has said—and she has suggested to me recently—that she would like it to be at the highest level possible for all of our schools and all of our students. Observing performances, you may see a different performance in some schools relative to other schools.

**Ms BEDFORD:** I certainly do.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Do we have a formalised measure of that, with assessors going out and checking that? We do not. I certainly hear feedback from the member and other members of parliament, who have mostly really positive things to say about their schools. One of the things we would like Mr Birch to do is work with schools as he goes around the state to ensure that standards are appropriate. I hope that will actually see an uplift in our whole system. In terms of a formalised measure, I cannot point to one.

**Ms BEDFORD:** At least the department has turned its mind to it, which is useful.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** And it is something that the member had brought to my attention and I think very fairly so.

**Ms BEDFORD:** My last question may be slightly off field, but it is on pages 176 and 177 of Budget Paper 4, Volume 1. What work is being done to identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students well in advance of years 11 and 12 for assistance into scholarships for further education? Does a program that used to exist for teaching scholarships still exist and, if so, how many students have successfully completed their Bachelor of Education through that program?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Sorry, just give me a moment.

**Ms BEDFORD:** Sure. It could be good for me to mention here that Muriel Matters studied music at the conservatorium.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Muriel Matters was a trailblazer in so many ways.

**Ms BEDFORD:** She did everything; that is right.

**The CHAIR:** Muriel Matters is not mentioned in the budget papers.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** There are a number of measures being taken under the Aboriginal Education Strategy, which we announced last year, and there are a number of measures being undertaken in our schools already identifying students. Perhaps I can just reflect on some of the strategies. Some of them may fit in exactly to the question that the member asked; some of them might be slightly broader.

I indicate that SAASTA is obviously an ongoing program that was established well over a decade ago now and continues to be expanded. We have changed its name from the South Australian Aboriginal Sports Training Academy to Secondary Training Academy at the request of people in SAASTA to reflect the fact that it is not just about sports; it does other work as well. That body obviously does work in identifying and supporting students to achieve their all.

This year, we have seen the Clontarf Foundation academies start to do their work at sites in Whyalla, Port Augusta, Port Lincoln and at Ocean View College, supporting six schools in those four academies. They are particularly focused on getting young Aboriginal boys and young men re-engaged with education. The students in question are ones who were disengaging, many of whose attendance was minimal—less than 50 per cent, maybe up to 60 or 70 per cent—and who were really at risk.

What we are seeing through those programs is they are getting them to school, they are giving them meaningful things to do and they are using football as an incentive, but there is also a lot about life skills. The two academies that I have visited at Ocean View College and at Port Augusta Secondary School had a board of attendance that shows each week how much the kids are coming. They spur each other on to get that 100 per cent, which a majority of those kids are now getting. Those kids are doing well at school now and hopefully will engage in further study.

Scholarships for teachers are under the Amy Levai scholarships. That still exists, but I am going to have to take on notice the numbers and completion rates for that. On further scholarship initiatives, I know that we have received some contact from Michael O'Loughlin—I think it is the GO Foundation. Michael O'Loughlin and Adam Goodes engaged with a couple of our schools in the north and the first cohort of students getting those scholarships, I believe, are getting scholarships this year. They are scholarships to support the kids while they are at school and if there is any way that we can enhance that program, we will. There are other supports throughout the Aboriginal Education Strategy.

**Mr BOYER:** Minister, on Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 169, how much of the \$12 million that is allocated to Golden Grove High School will be spent on new classrooms to accommodate the transition of year 7 into high school?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I thank the member for the question. I will take it on notice and see what we can provide in the short term, but obviously, as I said to the shadow minister earlier, when the scope of these projects is finalised and the details are finalised, that detail will be released as well. For the purposes of the committee, I will take it on notice and we will provide back what we can.

**Mr BOYER:** On the same budget line, Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 169, when does the government anticipate that year 7s will be on the Golden Grove High School campus?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** They will be starting students at Golden Grove High School in term 1, 2022. Obviously there will be students who will engage with the high schoolers, and I suspect that they probably already do from time to time, but it is term 1, 2022, when there will be students at Golden Grove High School in year 7.

**Mr BOYER:** When would construction need to begin on additional classrooms to make sure those year 7 students have classrooms when they move to the site?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** The detail will be in the scope which, as we say, has not come out yet. I make the point that, because there are a large number of these, we are not eager to have every single one of them at the same stage of progress at exactly the same time across all of these schools because, of course, there is a body of work and there is a certain number of people in the industry in South Australia who are able to do the work.

The staging will be taking place throughout the rest of 2019, through 2020 and through 2021. The advice that I have received is that the completion will be before the end of 2021, but you will notice that all of the lines on page 169 in relation to these schools, with one or two exceptions, do say December 2021. I think that it is fairly reasonable to say that I am hoping that some of them will be completed substantially before then, and the staging within that is being worked through.

**Mr BOYER:** Same budget line again, minister. What does the government anticipate the increase in enrolments at Golden Grove High School will be, taking into account year 7 moving to that school?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I believe that is publicly available, but to assist the committee and the member, the increase in Golden Grove is expected to be 400, of which the overwhelming majority of 380 of them are year 7s.

**Mr BOYER:** Same budget line and same question but this time for Brighton Secondary School.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Sorry, what was the question?

**Mr BOYER:** What is the increase in school enrolments based on year 7 transitioning at that site?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** If it assists, the February 2018 enrolments at Brighton Secondary School were 1,693 and we are seeking to build the capacity to 1,800. It is possible, as I said before, that Brighton Secondary School is managing that current enrolment through timetabling opportunities and fitting students in over capacity. Obviously, we prefer there to be capacity for the students who are going in.

**Mr BOYER:** Same budget line again. Am I right then in saying that, roughly speaking, the increase in Golden Grove High School is somewhere in the vicinity of 380, which are year 7 students, and the increase at Brighton Secondary School is 100 due to transition from year 7 into high school?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** They are not necessarily apples with apples but the increase in capacity at Brighton Secondary School that we are looking at is 100. Brighton Secondary School is also taking other steps, as I outlined before, including limiting the number of international students. I think we will see quite a bit of a decline in the numbers of international students at Brighton Secondary School. They have already, I think, in the last couple of years, tightened up the way that they are enforcing their zone. So it is not necessarily apples with apples there, but it is correct to say that we are increasing capacity at Golden Grove High School by 400, of whom 380 are the year 7s.

**Mr BOYER:** On the same budget line again, is it not true then that Golden Grove High School, taking into account the \$10 million that was given by the previous government under Building Better Schools, plus I think a top-up of somewhere in the vicinity of \$5.5 million, gives about \$15.5 million in disposal for Golden Grove High School, and Brighton Secondary School has about \$13.8 million available to it? How do you rationalise those two figures, given that one school seems to be having an increased capacity of 100 and the other school is having an increased capacity of 400, and Golden Grove High School is every bit as landlocked, in terms of its capacity to develop out, as Brighton Secondary School?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** The member is making a number of assumptions in that question. The first point is his expert opinion that Golden Grove High School is every bit as landlocked as Brighton Secondary School. That is not the advice that I have received from the education department in terms of the complexity of what a build would be. The second point I make is that, while the increase in capacity might be largely tied to the number of year 7s coming in, the facilities that are being constructed include a mix of specialist learning areas and, as I said before, other infrastructure that will be used by staff, and used by students from year 8, year 9, year 10, year 11 and year 12 as well, as well as the general learning areas occupied by the year 7s.

When the scope comes out and the detailed plans come out, the member is welcome to reflect on those and make the assertions. He can make the assertions now if he likes but I fear that the advice that I have had from the education department does not marry with what the member for Wright has asserted.

**Mr BOYER:** On the same budget line, what advice have you received from the department about the capacity of Golden Grove High School to expand compared with, say, Brighton Secondary School?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** The advice I have received, simply summarised as the Golden Grove High School build, can be done for the budget outline. I note that the member said, I think, \$15.5 million. There is the \$12 million that has been identified as clearly for Golden Grove and then there is a share of the \$56 million that was identified before, and it is a reasonable estimate to say that that would be about \$3.5 million—it may be a bit more, it may be a bit less—going there. But that \$56 million part of the announcement for the Year 7 to High School project is based on a number of students who are going to be going to these schools, not a dollar figure necessarily.

It is a reasonable anticipation that the \$3.5 million of that \$56 million can be added to the \$12 million existing at Golden Grove and so \$15.5 million is certainly going to be within the ballpark—it could be a bit more, it could be a bit less—and we will build the facilities needed. The advice I have had from the department is that that is what is going to be necessary to enhance the facilities and provide the necessary capacity for Golden Grove High School.

**Mr BOYER:** Same budget line: have any specific sites been identified at Golden Grove High School as to where those new classrooms might go?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I do not have that information. I believe it will be publicly released when the scope comes out.

**Mr BOYER:** Same budget line: from my reading of the budget papers, there is no extra money for The Heights School in Modbury Heights in the budget. How much of the \$10 million that

was allocated under the Building Better Schools fund is going to be spent at that school on extra classrooms for year 7 students?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** It will depend on the scope, which will be announced in due course, but it is not expected to be dramatic in my understanding.

**Mr BOYER:** On the same budget line regarding Banksia Park International High School, it is the same situation, I believe, as The Heights School, with no new money in this budget for them to be able to accommodate the year 7s who will move onto their site. How much of the \$9 million that was given under the previous government for Building Better Schools will be redirected to accommodate year 7s moving onto that site?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I think you get the same answer as for the previous questions of the same nature.

**The CHAIR:** Minister for Education, I refer to page 175 of Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, regarding the targets at dot point number 3 regarding the pilots of year 7 into high school in Mitcham Girls High School, John Pirie Secondary School and Wirreanda Secondary School. Can you provide an update to the committee as to how that is rolling out?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I am really pleased to and I think the principals of those three schools have indicated that they are very excited and their school communities are very excited about how it is rolling out. The Chair would be aware that one of those schools is in his electorate, Mitcham Girls High School.

**The CHAIR:** It is, yes.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** It is a remarkable coincidence. There were more than 160 expressions of interest from families of students currently in year 6 who wish to undertake year 7 there. The principal there is very excited. There are nearly 100 students at John Pirie Secondary School whose families indicated an interest there, and at Wirreanda it was more than 100. To make these pilots work, we would have needed several dozen students and their families to indicate an interest in having the opportunity to do year 7 in high school next year. To have well over 300 families at the three schools do it exceeded our hopes, but it does not exceed the capacities of those schools.

Those schools are preparing well. They are working with their local primary schools. We are grateful for the assistance of our staff who are helping to make this work as well. There is an opportunity for some of the local primary schools to have a look at the way that year 6s and 7s, who are leaving their primary schools at the same time, can graduate together. Some of the lessons from how they do that will be useful lessons for the end of 2021 when this is replicated across the state. Obviously, with two classes—the year 7s and the year 8s—both integrating into a new school at the same time, that is something that is new for these pilot schools that will have lots of important lessons for us for 2022.

It is not a trial in the sense that we know that year 7s can operate very well in a high school environment, and they do in other states. They do in other systems. Indeed, they do in the very many South Australian public schools that already have year 7s in a high school environment. We have a couple of 7-12 schools, we have a number of R-12 schools and area schools where the year 7s are already in that secondary school environment, and they do very well.

These three pilot schools are really important, though, to help us nail the transition to high school correctly—the transition out of primary school of two classes, the transition into high school of two classes at the same time—and that is why we are very excited that the pilots have not just met what we thought we needed but also that they have demonstrated significant excitement in those communities.

**Mr BOYER:** Minister, if I could return to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 169, I seek some clarification about your answers regarding Golden Grove High School in particular. Am I right in saying that the advice you have received from your agency is that Golden Grove High School is not as restricted in terms of its ability to be able to expand, as a school like Brighton Secondary School is, and that it is upon that advice largely that the amount of money in this budget paper that has been allocated has been allocated?



**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** The member's question, I think I understand. The amounts of money that were allocated for specific projects were based on departmental advice as to what was necessary and those announcements were made earlier this year. The member for King, Ms Paula Luethen, asked me several weeks ago, after a discussion with possibly the principal and members of the governing council at Golden Grove High School, whether that was going to be sufficient, because there was a suggestion that the land at Golden Grove High School, or the layout, was not too dissimilar to that at Glenunga where the funding is based on a more complex build than the allocation at Golden Grove.

So I sought further advice from the department and tested it. I think we may have even interrupted Ross Treadwell on his holidays, but we certainly interrogated the department and asked them to provide further advice. At this stage, the advice I have from the department has been consistent throughout: the build at Golden Grove is not of the level of complexity that we see at Brighton and Glenunga.

I will just check if that is still the case. Yes, and I just add the further point that there is some flex in the Golden Grove and those other schools that are part of the \$56 million announcement, because that announcement was tied to numbers of students that were expanding, so there is a possibility it may go up. The member has quoted the \$3.5 million of that \$56 million, which is expected to be needed to form a part of that. There is a little bit of flex there; otherwise, the department's advice has been consistent.

**Mr BOYER:** On the same budget paper again, am I right in saying that you have done some modelling that has informed the amount of money that is forecast to be spent on the increased capacity at Golden Grove High School, but no work has been done to identify where those additional classrooms to accommodate 380 extra year 7 students will actually go on the site?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** No, that is not exactly what I said. The advice from the department drove the allocation of budget. The work on where those classrooms might be and what new buildings are required, what nature they are and what are going to be specialist learning areas as well, which means science labs or performance rooms or other things that will be available beyond the general learning areas, is underway at the moment. When the scope of the project and the detail are announced, then they will be announced.

**Mr BOYER:** On the same budget paper, same budget line, can you rule out that those new classrooms will go on existing ovals at Golden Grove High School?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** We are certainly not looking to reduce oval space. I think that is one of the reasons identified earlier for the complexity of the build at some other schools, but the project scoping may suggest alternative layouts. I am not anticipating that being the case at Golden Grove, but I cannot rule out any specific detail. We are certainly looking to keep the ovals intact as they are, wherever that is possible.

**Dr CLOSE:** I have just one more question on that page that the member for Wright was asking about. In planning where students attend school, there is both the knowledge of the zones and there is the knowledge of where existing students are coming from. As has been noted many times, there are students who go to schools for which they are not zoned. When I was involved with the department we had star maps. Can the minister confirm that star maps are still being used to understand where students are coming from to attend school if they are not in the zone?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I am advised that there is a range of tools that are used. I am advised that star maps were not specifically used in the preparation of advice in relation to this project.

**Dr CLOSE:** Sorry, I probably expressed it badly. What I mean is, do they exist? Are there star maps for schools, not necessarily being used for this specifically but do they exist within the department as one of the ways in which you understand where students live versus where they go to school?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I will take that on notice.

**Dr CLOSE:** Thank you.

**Mr McBRIDE:** I have a question for the minister on Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 175, expenses. Minister, one of the Liberal Party's election commitments was to support an expansion of the breakfast programs in our schools. Can you advise how this is going?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I thank the member for MacKillop for this question. It is critically important that, as we seek to improve our schools and help every child to fulfil their potential, we focus on literacy and academic outcome, but to do that we also need to ensure that their wellbeing is strong and supported as well.

The School Breakfast Program was a critically important component of our Literacy Guarantee election promise, as the member would remember, recognising that children who arrive at school hungry have significant challenges, and behavioural and learning outcomes can be compromised. Any member of the community would be aware that it is difficult to fulfil your day and be your best when you are hungry, and even more so for school students. It does not necessarily just impact on the student themselves, but potentially on those around them in their classes and their teachers. Their behavioural challenges can be exacerbated by hunger, so that is why we thought it was important to look at this area.

A lot of great work goes on in our schools through the existing staff at schools: the wellbeing officers who were introduced in the last few years have a significant role to play, charities, local churches—a lot of these people do work in schools and have done for many years. I think more than 300 schools had pre-existing breakfast programs, but there was still opportunity to expand those, and there were schools as well that did not have a breakfast program but wanted one.

Some of the schools that did have a breakfast program were potentially one, two or three days a week, and some of them wanted to expand it too. So the funding we have provided, which is \$800,000 now over a four-year period, is to Foodbank and KickStart for Kids, \$100,000 each per year. That is provided to ensure that every school that needs a breakfast program can have one, that every school that has a breakfast program can have one to its full capacity.

The new funding has already been the catalyst for the program to commence in more than 30 new schools over and above those that were doing it before. As I said before, we are also working with schools to ensure that they are able to offer those programs on as many days as they like.

The funding also does something that is important that I had not appreciated until we were actually talking to Foodbank and KickStart for Kids about rolling out the program, and that is that it can guarantee the supply of food. While, by and large, the food is donated—and these are significant charities in South Australia, well supported charities in South Australia, that were able to do lots of good work without this funding beforehand—they can do more with it, expand the programs with it, but critically it means that at times, whether through drought conditions or severe economic downturn, there is a loss in donations, and there have been times when this has happened.

These programs can now guarantee supply to schools so that they can plan their programs going forward without any anxiety that, if the program donations drop off, if the charity donations drop off, they might have to drop the services offered, which would be a terrible thing for any of those volunteers to have to worry about. So they no longer have to worry about that as a result of the government support.

In addition to improving the physical health benefits in children, the School Breakfast Program has also had a great ability to assist social and emotional wellbeing, because it is not just in classes that these children are able to engage better when they are not hungry. The breakfast programs also enable us to intervene in some of these situations to give them extra support, to help them get along in social situations, to have them sitting at a table with other students and adults sharing a meal together which, unfortunately, is not an experience that is otherwise available in some of their lives.

Being able to engage with the charities to do that work is important. It is complementary to other initiatives in the department that support healthy eating in schools more broadly, including in the classroom and canteen context. The most significant of these include: funding that has been provided for the South Australian school canteen network to support capacity building across the canteen sector; a public health partnership agreement with the Department for Health and Wellbeing that focuses on updating the Right Bite healthy food and drink supply strategy; building skills and

capacity of school-based staff and volunteers; and coordinating and streamlining online resources available from each department.

We also have the COAG joint statement and good practice guide for healthy eating in schools, which the education ministerial council looked at not so long ago, and we reflected on some of the initiatives there that are already being taken up in South Australian schools, but we also reflected on what else we had to learn from it, as well as membership of the Vegetable Intake Strategy Alliance, with the handy acronym of VISA, which includes the CSIRO, Flinders Uni, Hort Innovation and the Department for Health and Wellbeing. Kids who are hungry do not learn as well as kids who are not hungry, and we want to make sure we can do what we can to support those students in our schools.

**Dr CLOSE:** If we can turn to page 177, with the number of students (towards the bottom) and students with disabilities, I have some questions that relate to the experience of students with disabilities in public schools. In the northern suburbs, when looking at special options, whether being in a special class, a disability unit or in a special school, at the secondary level in the northern suburbs region, how many applications are there that were eligible for special options versus how many places for next year?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I will probably take that on notice in a moment but, with the member's indulgence, I can actually provide an answer to the member for Wright's previous question in relation to the Golden Grove High School oval. I have received advice from the department that the work they are doing is that there is no plan to build on Golden Grove High School's oval. I will take the member's question on notice.

**Dr CLOSE:** I would also like that for the junior then, thank you.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I am happy to take that on notice.

**Dr CLOSE:** When the ages and stages questionnaire was sent out to assist in identifying students who were eligible for special options, did the minister receive any feedback from staff in the schools about the rollout of that, the time that was given and the amount of training that was given for using it?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I apologise. Could you repeat the question? The ages and stages?

**Dr CLOSE:** Yes, there is a questionnaire that teachers can fill out on ages and stages. Are the students at the stage that they ought to be, roughly, for the age that they are? I am wondering if the minister has received any information or feedback from any of the schools about the way in which that was rolled out, particularly in the northern suburbs.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Out of an abundance of caution, I will check if any feedback was provided to me or the department. I will take that on notice.

**Dr CLOSE:** Still on the subject of students with a disability, can the minister explain who is on the IESP panel and roughly what their qualifications or job titles are?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I will endeavour to get that by the end of the session, but for the moment I will take it on notice. If I can answer it before the end of the session, then I will do so.

**Dr CLOSE:** Can the minister confirm that schools were told that for students who were eligible for special options but were unable to have a placement for this year in a special option and therefore were being taught in a mainstream classroom, they would get a blanket category 5 level of support in a mainstream classroom if they had been eligible for a special class and a category 8 if they were eligible for a unit or a school?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** That sounds like a fairly detailed suggestion, so out of an abundance of caution—I could provide general information and take up some time but I would rather get to the nub of the member's question and answer it accurately, so I will take it on notice.

**Dr CLOSE:** The minister is not inclined to take advice to see if anyone with him might know?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Do you want to repeat the question so I can make sure that we get it exactly accurately correct?

**Dr CLOSE:** Were schools, this year, told that they would receive a category 5 support in mainstream classrooms for students who were eligible for special classes but in mainstream, and a category 8 support if eligible for a unit or school but placed in mainstream?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I will take that on notice, but to assist the member I will bring back an answer before the end of the session, if we can get that level of detail before the end of the session. We still have an hour, so there is a reasonable chance.

**Dr CLOSE:** Indeed. The subsequent question then is: can you confirm that they were told that and then that later that decision was rescinded and an assessment, student by student, had to be undertaken? I assume that is all bound up, so take that on notice and see how you go within the hour, or later, if necessary. On the funding model for disability support that changed at the beginning of this year, how many students had reduced support as a result of that? Did any students lose disability support altogether as a result and, presumably on notice, if there were students in those categories, at which schools were they attending?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** We will double-check the detail, but our belief at the table at least is that it would not have seen students lose. There are, of course, sometimes students who get an assessment in the normal course of things, and that is as it has ever been, so it would not be as a result of the change in the funding model. We think that more students are covered now but, again, the person with the specific detailed knowledge is not in the room, so we will double-check and if we can bring back a detailed answer before the end of the session, we will; otherwise, I will take it on notice.

**Dr CLOSE:** Also, still on the subject of students with disabilities, clearly the point of transition from school to, hopefully, post-school work or training is a very important one. Can the minister advise how many students are in transition programs, how many have been in those programs in the last, say, three years, and how many have been successful in going on to training or to work from those programs over the last three years?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I do not think the member will be surprised that, for that level of detail, I am going to take that on notice.

**Dr CLOSE:** I understand, thank you, and I appreciate that.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Can I actually provide some information to one of the earlier answers, which is that there was a feedback session. The member asked about feedback on the rollout. There was a feedback session that we organised involving preschool directors and school leaders held on 10 April to garner feedback regarding the implementation of the IESP initiative. That was because we wanted to know how people are finding it. Leaders at that session were largely positive. They provided valuable information in relation to what was working well and what was presenting as challenging for some. Certainly, we have endeavoured and are endeavouring to ensure that, where there are things that have been challenging, we can fix them.

**Ms WORTLEY:** My question, too, is in relation to special needs and disability. I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, pages 174 to 177. The minister will recall that in previous estimates I questioned the closure of the Strathmont swimming pool and the impact it was going to have on students. At the time, my understanding was that there were 15 schools with more than 450 students who were going to be impacted by the closure of that pool and be relocated to other pools. My question is: since the closure of the Strathmont pool, what has been the reduction in the number of hours to swimming therapy access or swimming lessons over the school year for the special needs students?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I can provide some information to the member. The Strathmont Centre swimming pool closed at the end of January 2019. The Strathmont Centre was operated by the Department of Human Services, and the Department for Education had access to the swimming pool for a number of years to provide students with disability at a number of schools access to the facilities at no cost. Obviously, the swimming pool was closed as it was no longer deemed as fit for purpose, and I am aware of some safety concerns that I think were described.

Alternative arrangements have been made for the 15 schools and the 452 students impacted by the closure regarding their water safety program for the 2019 school year. The majority of these schools have elected to access The Parks Recreation and Sports Centre, with the remaining schools accessing Clovercrest State Swim swimming pool, and I think two schools are accessing the Golden Grove State Swim swimming pool.

Some schools have made a decision to vary the level of their access for some or all of the students who were previously accessing Strathmont. The cost impact varies for each school but may include an increase in the cost of travel due to changes in distance between the school and the new swimming pool and the cost of pool entry. The Strathmont Centre was one of only three swimming pools where there has been traditionally no pool entry cost for students with disabilities. Most of the pools used for students with disabilities for a number of years do not have that feature.

The majority of students with disabilities attending government schools accessing a regular weekly program pay a school pool entry fee, ranging from approximately \$3 to \$4.50. A temporary subsidy of the new pool entry cost has been approved by the Department for Education in relation to students who were previously accessing the Strathmont swimming school to ensure that each of those students will pay no more than \$2 a session in 2019, and the annual cost to the department is estimated for that to be \$38,000.

The Office for Recreation, Sport and Racing has funded the installation of four new automatic doors at The Parks Recreation and Sports Centre change rooms in line with disability access requirements to support the needs of these students and indeed anyone else with a disability accessing those facilities.

The Department for Education is funding the installation of four overhead lifters or hoists in the change rooms at The Parks Recreation and Sports Centre to be used by students with disabilities. There was a delay in the installation of the hoists due to supply issues with the overseas manufacturer, and at the time the advice provided to me was this was due to occur between 19 and 22 June, so I am hoping those hoists are now in place.

With the closure of Strathmont, existing specialised equipment was sourced from a range of places and moved to The Parks to ensure the water safety program can continue to take place for students with a disability prior to the new specialised equipment being permanently installed in the middle of this year.

The new program for students with disabilities commenced at The Parks on 4 February. Programs at the other swimming centres commenced the following week. The instructor in charge of the water safety program at The Parks has indicated that facilities at The Parks are significantly better than the Strathmont Centre swimming pool, and this will deliver greater educational outcomes and water safety for all involved.

**Ms WORTLEY:** Thank you for that information, minister; I was aware of a lot of that as it is.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Good.

**Ms WORTLEY:** In relation to the flow-on costs to schools and to parents, would you be able to provide information specifically regarding the cost of travel for transport, including the cost of bus hire and taxis for the students to get to pools that in some cases are half an hour from where their school is? It means that it is an hour of travel there and back. They are missing out on lesson time as well. The other question that I have is specifically the number of hours that have been reduced. I would like to know the number of hours that these special needs students have had reduced as a result of the closure of the Strathmont pool and them having to be relocated elsewhere.

In addition, you just described a comment from the person in charge at the swimming pool there. In terms of specifically the access to the pool, at Strathmont many of these special needs students had sensory issues relating to spatial awareness and also to the noise surrounding them. What is the current situation at the swimming pools they are attending, and do they have the equal amount of swimming pool space? My understanding is that in some cases they are restricted to two lanes, whereas previously they had a full swimming pool for their lessons.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I will look into these matters and provide some information to the member.

**Dr CLOSE:** I would like now to turn to page 187 of Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, which looks at describing some of the variances in the figures. One, about a third of the way down, refers to the impact of efficiency measures of \$21.6 million. Can the minister describe what works ceased as a result of achieving those efficiency measures?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** There were a range of things that happened. I can advise the member that my office manager tells me that the Minister for Education's office came in about half a million dollars under budget, which of course is a substantial saving to the taxpayers of South Australia and assists the education department in its savings measures. We also no longer have seven outposted staff from the education department doing roles in the Minister for Education's office, as occurred under the previous government, so that helped. There are a range of things that were done. Salary harvesting is one of those measures.

**Dr CLOSE:** Can the minister explain what salary harvesting is for the listeners?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Salary harvesting has been explained earlier. It is something the education department has done. It relates to when a role ceases and before the replacement is necessarily taken on board in a department as large as the education department; that is able to assist us in our goal.

**Dr CLOSE:** I do not regard that as a comprehensive description of what work has ceased to achieve the \$21.6 million. Would the minister like to try to give a bit more of a description? Which positions were harvested, for example? Which TVSPs were offered? Where were those TVSPs? Where was the non-renewal of contracts occurring? What work is not now happening as a result? \$21.6 million is reasonably substantial and it cannot just have been—

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Sorry, which question would you like me to answer?

**Dr CLOSE:** I am trying to give you an understanding of what I mean when I ask what work ceased to achieve the \$21.6 million. What stopped?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** We no longer have two communications officers from the education department posted in the minister's office, so that helped.

**Mr BOYER:** That was \$21.6 million, was it?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** They were reasonably well remunerated; it is not the full extent of the savings. We also had, of course, some opportunities—I think it was in this financial year that we cancelled the former government's laptop giveaway program. That saved a lot more than that, I would have thought.

**Dr CLOSE:** That was already spent.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** There were some TVSPs that were around 200 full-time equivalent staff. They were non-teaching and non-direct support staff. There were two rounds of expressions of interest for a TVSP. There was an organisational restructure, and the process was developed considering feedback from employees and was designed to maximise employee choice. A range of stakeholders were engaged throughout that process. I think the work the education department is doing is focused on ensuring that we are able to deliver great outcomes for our students, and the savings that are made in these areas are all being reapplied in education.

**Dr CLOSE:** Can the minister provide the list of position titles for those people who received TVSPs in the last financial year? It will be on notice, I am assuming, as there were several of them.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I will endeavour to find out whatever we can to release to the member. Whatever is appropriate to release, we will do so.

**Dr CLOSE:** Could the minister give a list of the areas in the department that had TVSPs given to staff?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I will take that as part of the previous question taken on notice.

**Dr CLOSE:** Were any people employed into the department taking up a position with the same title as a person who had received a TVSP?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I am advised that people were not replaced: some people left and some people came into the department. I am advised that the people coming into the department were not coming in to replace roles that were abolished. If there are any variances from that, obviously we will provide that information, but that certainly was not the—

**Dr CLOSE:** Only in the environment department.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** That is certainly not something that I was led to believe was happening and it is certainly not something that we understand has happened.

**Dr CLOSE:** How much was spent on refurbishing the level 9 offices for the minister and how much of that was investing versus operating?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** The changes in the office are out of the ministerial office budget, which, as I say, came in at about half a million dollars under budget last year. There were some occupational health and safety issues in one of the staff offices, I think there might have been some new chairs and there was some new paint. I do not think we have the exact number here, but it was in the order of a couple of thousand dollars.

**Dr CLOSE:** So there has been no refurbishment otherwise of the minister's office?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** More recently, there was a dividing area removed and apparently there was a problem with the air conditioning. Again, we are talking in the order of several thousand dollars. I think that it was extremely modest in the scale of things. I think I still have your old chair.

**Dr CLOSE:** I am sure I did not create too much of a dent in it.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Somebody from your office was kind enough to leave one of your old staffing profiles with all of those extra people listed above the FTE count in the budget papers; that was kind of them. There is a bar fridge in the Minister for Education's office; it does not work.

**Dr CLOSE:** Is it still dysfunctional? It did not work throughout my time—did not need it.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** We have not bothered moving it. It is sort of an historical relic. It sits alongside the minutes.

**The CHAIR:** Minister, I think the member for Colton is seeking the call.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** There were some very minor works done for staff health reasons, certainly nothing fancy, and I am happy to have the former minister come back and have a look any time.

**Mr COWDREY:** Speaking of expenses, my question is in regard to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 175. Can the minister advise what steps the government is taking to enhance physical education and physical literacy in our schools?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Thank you, and it is a real honour for me to get a question of this nature from somebody of the member for Colton's extraordinary stature. I appreciate the work he does in his local schools to use his prior career as Australia's most decorated Paralympian and one of our most decorated sportspeople to inspire young people in their physical education and physical literacy. This is something I know the chief executive of the department is really excited about, and so if I miss anything out I am sure he will nudge me and get the opportunity to say something about it as well.

It was a real pleasure, on Sunday 9 June, to be able to announce that what we have called the PEPL initiative, which stands for physical education and physical literacy, was going to be able to go ahead, certainly in pilot form. It was developed by Professor Dick Telford of Canberra university, along with some partners, aiming to promote children's physical activity, teachers' capacity in delivering physical education and linking students with community sporting opportunities.

It is something we have been working on very strongly with the Australian Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation, which is the body in South Australia that is the professional organisation, if you like, for health and PE teachers. It was an absolute thrill to be able to attend their conference in the school holidays. Unfortunately, it was just before we made this announcement so I was not able to tell them all at the time but I have subsequently learned that they are very excited about it.

The approach involves the placement of an experienced health and PE trained teacher as a PEPL coach in a cluster of eight to 10 schools to provide personalised and flexible in-class professional development for HPE and classroom teachers. Approximately 4,000 students from years 2, 4 and 6 in up to 30 primary schools will participate in PEPL in 2020. HPE lessons will increase from one lesson to two lessons per week, and teachers will be supported to incorporate regular 'activity snacks'; that is what they are called in the program and apparently it gets the kids interested. An activity snack is a vigorous activity between periods of in-class concentration.

Supplementing the HPE lessons, state sporting organisations will also deliver coaching clinics to students to build their fundamental movement skills. The Department for Education, partnered with Professor Telford, ACHPER (the professional association for teachers that I identified before), the University of Canberra, Hockey Australia and Flinders University to submit the PEPL proposal to the Move It AUS participation grant program, which is run by Sport Australia, the national body. Sport Australia will provide \$700,000 for Hockey Australia, the lead agency in the funding application, to fund the PEPL initiative from June 2019 to December 2020.

In addition to that, as an in-kind contribution, the Department for Education will provide one FTE, a project manager, with on-costs worth over \$150,000 in in-kind support. Out of the \$700,000, we will also benefit from \$362,000 into the department to employ those three FTE educators for 12 months, and they will be overseen by the project manager. We are very excited about this. The initiative will be evaluated by Flinders University, reporting on PEPL as a proof-of-concept initiative, and if it is successful then we will certainly be looking to roll it out more broadly across the state. Was there anything that the chief executive—no, you are happy with that.

**Mr BOYER:** I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 187. I think in your opening statement you touched briefly upon the incident management directorate, as you referred to it, and an FTE who had been moved from there.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I did not think I had an opening statement.

**Mr BOYER:** It might have been your answer to an earlier question.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Okay.

**Mr BOYER:** Let's call it that. Can you tell us a little bit about what that FTE, who is no longer in the IMD, was doing and how that person's function has been absorbed?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I might ask the chief operating officer to provide her reflections, as it is in her area.

**Ms RIEDSTRA:** The position, the role and the person simply transferred from the incident management directorate to the people and culture division with no change. The role is supporting principals with minor misconduct matters.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** That was the position that was moved. You were also interested in the ones that were no longer required.

**Mr BOYER:** Yes, that is right.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Again, I will invite the chief operating officer to respond to that.

**Ms RIEDSTRA:** There were two positions abolished within the directorate: one was a case manager position and that was based on the number of cases being managed currently by the directorate in comparison to the number that were being managed at the time that the position was created, so it just led to the fact that we did not require that position; and the other was an



administrative officer position, and the directorate combined all of their administration together to make efficiencies.

**Mr BOYER:** On the same budget line, does the department monitor the average time it takes the IMD to complete its investigations?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Yes, is the answer. There is a target that matters be resolved in six months. My advice has been, since I have been the minister, fairly consistently that that target is being met unless there are specific circumstances, and usually that would be court matters waiting to be resolved. Let me just check—let's say court matters or other matters of a legal nature.

**Mr BOYER:** On the same budget line again, my understanding of your earlier answer is that we have seen removed from the directorate a case manager position, an admin position and another position that has been moved into the people and culture area.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Yes.

**Mr BOYER:** I understand that the consultation that was done on the restructure of incident management sought feedback from staff. Some of the feedback raised concerns about the potential for workload issues to arise as a result of the proposed changes. How has that been addressed, given that we have three fewer FTEs in that division than before the changes were proposed?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** In relation to those three positions, the answers are nuanced for each of the three. The staff member who was moved to people and culture also took their responsibilities with them so, yes, inasmuch as there was a reduction in that FTE from the directorate, the responsibilities of that staff member were also transferred with the staff. They took their workload with them.

In relation to the two positions that were removed, the case manager position that was no longer required was as a result of a reduction in the number of cases, as I am advised, so that had a corresponding reduction in the workload that made that possible. In relation to the administrative officer, my understanding is that there were systems improvements in the administration there which meant that the workload capacity was able to be managed. As I am advised, that is working out just fine.

**Ms WORTLEY:** Minister, there does not appear to be additional funding for Avenues College in the budget.

**The CHAIR:** Member for Torrens, which page and reference are you looking at?

**Ms WORTLEY:** Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, pages 169 and 189. There does not appear to be additional funding in the budget for Avenues College. I know that, as it is getting closer to the relocation of the primary school onto the site—it is the beginning of next year, I believe—there is an increased interest in student enrolment at the school. I want to know what the minister is going to do to assist with capacity management at the new B-12 college.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Avenues College obviously had a voluntary amalgamation process and that determined a certain amount of funding that would be available for an infrastructure build to start with. In addition to that, since coming to government the new government has provided extra money in the budget to assist that to be a larger build. I appreciate that the school council chair has asked for more than that extra money. The advice I have had from the education department is that, with the extra money that the new government has provided, that will enable the new build to be sufficient for the school. It will be an excellent new build.

With new students comes new money, as a general course, as a result of the education department's funding model. The number of students impacts on the funding a school gets. As Avenues College has an increased number of students, so too will its budget increase. My advice is that new funding, as part of the year 7 project, was not required over and above what the Avenues College already has to enable year 7s to come in. Obviously, there are some who are going to be there already. Potentially that will increase but not by a substantial number.

**Ms WORTLEY:** In response to that, money that comes in for students is not in relation to the building and the infrastructure. We are talking about being able to accommodate the new interest

in the amalgamated school on the campus. So you are saying now that there will be no additional money for Avenues College as it becomes a B-12 school.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** My advice is that it is not necessary, from what we can observe at this stage. I have great confidence in the teaching and learning that is going on at Avenues College. I am a huge champion, when people ask me about their local schools, and I like to point out the wonderful work that is going on there. So I really hope people respond in the way that the member is suggesting they do and fill up Avenues College. I hope that all of these classrooms are used to their capacity. I think it will be a wonderful education institution when the new build is completed. I think it is a wonderful education institution now and I really hope the member is correct, that those numbers there continue to increase, because that would be a lovely challenge for us to have.

**Ms WORTLEY:** With an increase in numbers, though, will there be additional funding? Is additional funding available to ensure that the students in the area who want to come to Avenues College are able to do so?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** The question clearly is hypothetical. We base our decisions, as a government, around doing everything we can to ensure that our schools are world-class, to ensure that children in local areas are able to be guaranteed a space at their local public school and then we have matters to do with building infrastructure that helps that. In some areas, where there are particularly high levels of interest and it is difficult sometimes to build that extra infrastructure, we have had to support schools to enforce their zones or even enforce capacity management plans. To this stage, Avenues College has not been listed as one of those schools that is going to require that mechanism to take place.

I think that kids who go to Avenues College are getting a great education, and I am really excited to see what that school is going to do in the years ahead. I thank the teachers and the staff there, and the governing council for supporting it. But the advice I have had is that at this stage there is no extra capital works funding that is required to meet the school's needs. In the years ahead, if there is shown to be new advice, then obviously the government will take that into account.

**Ms WORTLEY:** Thank you, minister. We agree on one thing: it is a wonderful school.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I also said that it will continue to be a wonderful school and it will get even better. I hope we agree on that, too.

**Mr BOYER:** Minister, in relation to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 187, in an answer to a previous question I asked about whether your agency monitors the time it takes to complete investigations in the incident management directorate, I think you mentioned that there was a target of six months. Has that time frame or target been met in all cases since you have been the minister?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I said that there was a target of six months. I then went on to say that there were a number of exceptions to that. As far as I am aware, they are all to do with court or other legal related matters. Some of those are obviously in court and are publicly available; some of them are not so readily describable.

**Mr BOYER:** On the same budget line, the answer is no; is that right?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I think I have answered this question twice now. The target is six months. Where we are able to do so, absent instruction from any other legal related entities such as courts, then my understanding is we are achieving that.

**Mr BOYER:** On the same budget line again, minister, how many investigations were conducted by the directorate in the last financial year, and how does that compare with the two years before it?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I will take that on notice.

**Mr ELLIS:** I refer to Budget Paper 4, volume 1, page 175, targets, second dot point from the bottom. Minister, what is the government doing to improve school attendance rates?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I thank the member for this question. It is obviously critically important for all of our children, in order to achieve their best and be their best selves, to have successful lives and get the best possible education, that they be at school to receive that education.

I know that this is something that has been a challenge for successive governments and will continue to be a challenge in the future because often there are circumstances in the home that significantly impact on this, but that does not relieve us of a responsibility as a system to do everything we can to get the best attendance possible.

That has been something that was a commitment of the new government coming in. It was something that was a commitment in the couple of years leading up to the election. I was pleased during that period to see a renewed emphasis on some of these measures by the former government. I thank the member for Port Adelaide for taking a couple of steps when she was the minister, which I will probably come to in a moment.

Nevertheless, we have taken significant further steps over the last 16 months since the Liberal Party was elected. The government's commitment to addressing attendance outlined a range of strategies for schools and ways to work with parents. Early on, after coming to government, we completed an audit of all public schools' compliance and adherence with departmental attendance policy requirements. We completed an audit of all children and young people in care who were on reduced hours of attendance at school and have taken steps to re-engage them in mainstream education, as recommended by Justice Nyland.

We have increased the number of Department for Education truancy officers by 50 per cent or 11 FTEs, taking the total number of positions up to 33 FTEs, to support truancy and attendance issues across government and non-government schools. The department's 'Attendance matters in South Australian preschools and schools' document outlines a whole school approach to attendance, which includes the promotion of the importance of education from the earliest years by supporting families to understand the importance of education and positive patterns of attendance, the active engagement of children and young people and their families in education, and strategies to address barriers to attendance, such as monitoring attendance patterns, taking early action on attendance concerns and addressing chronic non-attendance.

Current initiatives underway at the moment under 'Attendance matters' include a parent-targeted social media pilot campaign with the message 'Every day missed is a barrier to learning'. That campaign has been released to the inner west and to the Port Augusta-Quorn partnerships in week 3 of term 2 this year at a cost of approximately \$96,000 for market research materials and, critically, evaluation because we want to make sure that the messaging we are putting out is going to be effective and will speak to parents or speak to students and will help us achieve our goals.

There is also a partnership with the Youth Affairs Council of South Australia, which I think was in discussion for some time, but we were able to get that locked in. That provides a youth voice on attendance improvements. They have been funded for \$200,000 over two years to develop a peer education bullying prevention initiative, which is part of our bullying prevention strategy but has a critical role in attendance, and also to review current policies and procedures relating to attendance, for a trial of a family group conferencing model for chronic non-attendance, which has commenced, and systems to support schools to monitor student attendance and resources to support schools to implement policy and improve attendance.

The department has drafted a new attendance policy, which underlines the responsibilities of all members of the school community to ensure children and young people are attending school. Public consultation on the policy ended recently, and the final policy will be released in term 3. As a response to the Child Protection Systems Royal Commission, a second audit of children and young people in care on reduced hours of attendance is currently underway as well.

We have committed to enforcing the powers under the sections of the Education Act in relation to parents who make no attempt to keep their children in school or who obstruct officers in identifying their children as truant. I thank the former member for taking this on in the last couple of years that Labor was in office and bringing two prosecutions to the fore, which I think had an important role in highlighting public awareness, highlighting the fact that the existing laws, while potentially could be improved, were adequate to bring a successful prosecution and to ensure and highlight to both the families of those children involved, who have spent a lot more time at school

since those prosecutions than they did before, but also to others in that situation that they could be prosecuted.

Prosecution of a parent is only considered in a case where it is determined by the department to be in the best interests of the child, where all other interventions have been unsuccessful and where fair warnings have been provided, and those are reasonable measures, and then it comes to the minister for approval. Further, under the Education and Children's Services Bill, which I am not sure if I can talk about it—it is between the houses, so let's say that I can briefly reflect on it—we are proposing to increase the maximum fine for parents who allow their children to be chronically truant, and for those hindering or obstructing others in identifying children and young people not at school.

It also includes the power to cause a family group conference to address a child's non-attendance at school, and the trial of the family group conferencing model will inform how this is implemented. Those are some fairly substantial and important improvements to the legislation. I am really pleased that, as that legislation has gone to a conference of managers of the houses, all of those aspects I have just talked about in relation to assisting our management of truancy and non-attendance have remained intact through the consideration of the bill.

So as long as we can sort out those three last little bits, hopefully next Wednesday or any time thereafter, this will be the law going forward, which will dramatically enhance our ability to provide both at the beginning a supported mechanism through family group conferencing but also strengthen the stick to ensure that parents are engaging where they previously have chosen not to. So I thank the opposition and all the other parties who sit in this red house for showing their support for these measures in that bill, which will help our work.

**Dr CLOSE:** To return to page 167 of Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, there is a reference to programs moving to Human Services: 231 people, FTEs, and previously the year before that 200 people, 199.8 FTEs. Can the minister explain which staff have moved over to Human Services, the grouping of titles? It does not need to be title by title.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I think that the simplest thing is to provide the information I have here, which I think answers all of those questions, and then you can let me know if we have fallen short. The government has developed a child and family intensive support system, which includes a transfer of a range of services and programs to the Department of Human Services from other agencies for reporting. A total of 231.3 FTE and \$337.3 million in budget from the Department for Education has been transferred to DHS to support the delivery of the functions and programs identified.

The services and programs transferred are to include all associated funding, staff, management, clinical governance and resources to support the implementation of the new system through the creation of the new intensive support unit within DHS. The transfer of the following functions and programs from the Department for Education to DHS came into effect from 1 July:

- the Child and Family Assessment and Referral Networks (known colloquially as CFARNS);
- the child wellbeing program;
- family practitioners;
- community development coordinators;
- Strong Start;
- parenting and family support programs;
- the Targeted Intervention Service (known slightly less colloquially as TIS);
- Family by Family;
- a grant to Playgroup SA;
- the child safe environments;

- strategic projects/Nyland royal commission, which I assume is in relation to a response to recommendations in the Nyland royal commission; and
- the education functions of the Multi-Agency Protection Service and the Multi-Agency Assessment Unit.

Community development coordinators and family practitioners will remain located within Department for Education children's centres; however, staff will transfer to DHS for their line management, changing from children's centres directors to senior family practitioners and senior community development coordinators as part of the transfer to DHS.

The child and family intensive support system will support greater collaboration and integration between services across government and will consolidate services and staff as part of the redesign of the state's child abuse and neglect early intervention and prevention system. Currently, service provision and funding for intensive family services is split across different government departments, including education, health and child protection.

Transfer of employees from the Department for Education to DHS will be published—or possibly was published—by notice in the *Gazette*, pursuant to section 9 of the Public Sector Act 2009. The instrument of delegation, via a 2011 machinery of government, that replicated responsibilities and functions for the Child and Family Health Services from the Minister for Health and Wellbeing to the Minister for Education and Child Development, I believe has been revoked. If it has not been it certainly will, but I am informed now that it has been.

**Dr CLOSE:** I will ask questions in the early childhood section about some of the changes that have been made that affect early childhood services. With the wellbeing practitioners, there were 70-odd in March of last year. They were located with schools. Has their reporting line changed away from the Department for Education and into the Department of Human Services?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I think, technically, there is a reporting line that goes to DHS, but in effect their jobs are largely as they were before and they are still working very closely with the principals. I think that if there is any further information that will assist in a fuller understanding of that, then I will bring it back. Effectively, yes, the reporting line has moved to DHS, as I am advised, but in practice I do not believe that we have seen any substantial change to the roles they do or the ways in which they do it.

**Dr CLOSE:** What commitment is there from the Department of Human Services to the Department for Education about the kind of service delivery that can be expected from the child wellbeing practitioners, and also about their commitment to continue to fund the positions?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** We are currently finalising a memorandum of understanding between the two agencies. We will check. We will provide the information in due course, but we are going to lock that in very solidly.

**Dr CLOSE:** That is probably an MOU for all the effort that has been moved across, rather than just for the child wellbeing practitioners?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** If there is a detail that is in addition to that, I will happily bring it back.

**Dr CLOSE:** I would like to know how much money has been put to support the child wellbeing practitioners from the education budget to the human services budget?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** We will break down the 337 when we bring back, I think, one of the former questions I have taken on notice; I am sure we can incorporate it into that answer.

**Dr CLOSE:** If we can turn to page 174, just a quick question: what was the date of the tender for the internet speed project that has been updated at various times in the last few months?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** We announced it on 11 December 2018. I note that Telstra did some work earlier in the year that we talked about last year, I think to prove up the concept. I think we had that at a very beautiful rate.

**Dr CLOSE:** It is the tender date I am interested in.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Yes, I appreciate that. I am just seeing if we have the detail here or if we need to take it on notice and come back. The advice I have was that there were some moves made by the former government in late January 2018. They announced—I suppose the member announced an intention, possibly with the former member for Cheltenham, to invest in internet services across the state, aimed at providing speeds 10 times faster, on average, for all schools and preschools.

At the time it was stated the investment would be tens of millions of dollars, but due to ongoing negotiations detailed costs were considered commercial-in-confidence. The final cost was going to be provisioned against future commonwealth revenue in anticipation of the finalisation of a national agreement. The amount did not form part of the department's approved budget. I am advised that is because it is difficult to include in the department's approved budget money coming from the commonwealth that has not been agreed to.

I confirm that I signed the national schools funding agreement at the East Adelaide School with federal minister Dan Tehan in the second half of last year. I seem to recall the shadow minister saying that was a bad thing at the time, but until that money was available it could not be in the department's budget. Inasmuch as a date on which we dealt with it, after cabinet dealt with it last year, we will see if we can bring that back before the end of the day, and if we cannot I will take it on notice—

**Dr CLOSE:** Thank you; I appreciate that.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** —but I will do my level best to get the answer back today.

**Dr CLOSE:** Yes; date of tenders would be terrific. Also on that page there are some references to NAPLAN. I understand the recent ministerial council decided that it would not go for a full rollout next year, that that would be deferred again for the following year. What criteria will the minister be using for determining how many students have their NAPLAN tests done online next year in public schools?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** The key thing that is probably going to inform us is a report that we have not yet received that was commissioned through either the officers group—

**Mr PERSSE:** AESOC.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** AESOC commissioned Deloitte to do some extensive work and identify exactly what went wrong, particularly on the first day of testing. I think it is fair to say that ministers from across the country—from all states and territories and the commonwealth—are very eagerly looking forward to that report. It is fair to say that different states had different levels of challenge.

While in South Australia we had a much higher percentage of schools than some other states that did NAPLAN Online, I think we had a much lower level of challenge than some of the other states reported. We had 1,000 students, out of more than 200,000 tests, that had to resit. Some other states with a lower proportion of schools going online had a higher proportion. I think Tasmania did not even have that level; they did not even need to do the resit in Tasmania.

One of the things that came out is that it was not necessarily a challenge that was tied to the infrastructure at a state level, but we cannot comprehensively state with certainty what went wrong on the first day until Deloitte comes back. Of course, the challenges at the school level—some students were locked out and could not get back in; some students had significant disruptions. I think the chief executive was in a school where it was a much shorter period of time. In some schools there was a minute or two disruption, and everyone was fine.

It is a complex question. Obviously we want answers, and we are hoping that report from Deloitte will give us that certainty in the coming weeks. It was a really collaborative discussion in the ministerial council. We are not supposed to talk in too much detail about things that happen inside the council, but the communique is there for all to see.

**Dr CLOSE:** Will that report be made public?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** That is a matter for the ministerial council and so I cannot unilaterally, on behalf of the eight other ministers and myself, make that determination. I would

certainly suggest that whether or not the report is made public in full, I am pretty sure that we will be keen to release the findings as quickly as possible. I think whatever the outcomes are of this report, it will both inform the decisions made by ministers and also inform the community, parents, students and teachers about how they will go into the NAPLAN Online test next year, so it is critically important that we get that information and I am looking forward to receiving it.

**The CHAIR:** The member for MacKillop has the call.

**Mr McBRIDE:** Thank you, Mr Chair. My question refers to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 175, expenses, supplies and services. Payment on time is critical for viability of suppliers. Could you outline the timeliness of accounts payable?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Yes, thank you. I am happy to take a very brief period of time to do this. It is an important point and I know that the member for MacKillop, as somebody who has been involved in different forms of business throughout his life, has a very high level of interest in how we support our small businesses and businesses as a government. One of the best ways we can do that is by paying our bills on time, so when we came into government, that was a focus for our new government. I am pleased to say that the education department has done this pretty well historically, I think, but we always want to do better.

For the 2017-18 financial year, the overlap year in which there was an election, 96.92 per cent of invoices or 103,432 invoices were paid by the Department for Education within 30 calendar days and 0.42 per cent of invoices or 410 invoices were paid greater than 60 days. To date, at the time of this information, for the 2018-19 financial year, that had improved: 99.17 per cent of invoices were paid by the department within 30 calendar days and only 0.08 per cent of invoices were paid greater than 60 days. For the month of May, which is the most recent one for which I have details, 97.03 per cent of invoices were paid within 30 days and 0.15 per cent of invoices were paid greater than 60 calendar days, for a total value of less than \$2,500.

I am advised by the department that this improvement in payment performance has been directly attributed to the department's increased focus on the timeliness of invoice payments. That will continue to be a focus for us going forward. We have new legislation that punishes the recalcitrant departments, and I am very pleased to say that, while we have been subject to a small amount, there has been late payment interest incurred for 11 invoices this financial year. The total up to May 2019 was \$378.55. It is not good enough, but we are doing better than before and we will continue to strive to do better.

**Dr CLOSE:** Could I ask one more question on page 174? At the top, there is reference to the National School Reform Agreement that the minister referred to earlier. Can the minister—and I expect this will be taken on notice—provide information about how many public schools in South Australia are at 100 per cent of the SRS this year, next year and the year after anticipated, and which private schools are at 100 per cent or greater of the SRS this year, next year and the year after?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** In relation to the way that this is worked out, the member is well aware that the requirement is for the state education department to get to 75 per cent of SRS and, indeed, the commonwealth will get up to 20 per cent for public schools. In our non-government schools sector, there is a third contributing group in addition to the state and commonwealth governments, and that is parents who pay school fees. Because of the parental contribution, the government contribution that combines state and federal for non-government schools rarely gets close to 100 per cent.

In most schools, it is substantially less and the rest is supplemented by parental contribution. There would be some exceptions to that. I am thinking particularly of special assistance schools and possibly some of our schools focused on supporting students with disability. Indeed, there is a school called Pinnacle College that supports students. They are at Golden Grove, Elizabeth and they have one other campus—I forget off the top of my head where it is—and they were historically at a higher level, so they may be getting close to 100 per cent. The Catholic education sector, as the member well knows, is supported: 22 per cent of their SRS from the state government is applied to their whole sector and the Catholic education system can make some further determinations within that.

Given that the commonwealth government is heading towards 20 per cent and the state government is heading towards 75 per cent, to achieve that task the state government has had to commit an extra \$700 million to our public schools over and above that which was provisioned by the Labor Party when it was in government. That is added money going into the budget over the next decade. I think that question I have actually been able to answer.

I can also answer one of the earlier questions that I know the member for Port Adelaide was very eager to know. I have a date for when the tender went out for internet services to the across government network carriage services panel: it was 13 September 2018.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you, minister. Alas, time has expired. There being no further questions, I declare the examination of the proposed payments for the portfolio School Education completed.

*Sitting suspended from 11:32 to 11:45.*

#### **Membership:**

Ms Hildyard substituted for Mr Boyer.

#### **Departmental Advisers:**

Mr R. Persse, Chief Executive, Department for Education.

Ms J. Riedstra, Chief Operating Officer, Department for Education.

Ms K. Weston, Acting Executive Director, Early Years and Child Development, Department for Education.

Mr K. Brandon, Director, Early Childhood Services, Department for Education.

Mr C. Vetere, Director, Budget and Finance, Department for Education.

**The CHAIR:** We now move on to Early Childhood Development. The minister appearing is the Minister for Education. I declare the proposed payments open for examination and refer members to the Agency Statements, Volume 1. Minister, can you please update your advisers for the committee?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I am happy to do so. We have been joined at the head table by Karen Weston, who is the Acting Executive Director, Early Years and Child Development. Behind us is Ksharma Brandon, who is the Director of Early Childhood Services, Department for Education; Carmine Vetere, Director, Budget and Finance; and Julieann Riedstra and Rick Persse who were here before and here still.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you, minister. Will you make an opening statement?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Perhaps I will use the opportunity of an opening statement to answer one of the questions from the previous sessions, but it is actually also relevant for this session in relation to the Inclusive Education Support Program which is, of course, a program for preschools and schools, so it seems to be the sensible format for me to answer the question that the shadow minister asked about who was on the current Inclusive Education Support Program statewide centralised panel. The chair is Lynley Page, who is an assistant director of state and national reform.

The members of the panel include three senior psychologists; three senior speech pathologists; one complex needs health senior adviser; one complex behaviours expert educator adviser; one sensory needs expert educator; one early years disability senior adviser; three IESP senior advisers, one being, I am advised, Cathy Clark, who is the manager of this team; and eight, what is described as SSS (special educators/behaviour support coaches/team managers), all of whom, I am advised, are highly experienced educators with recent knowledge and experience working with sites and/or directly with LETs.

Representation includes country locations across five channels, i.e. two staff members for Port Augusta, Whyalla and Flinders Park; two staff members from Mount Barker/Mount



Gambier/Felixstowe; one staff member in Noarlunga and Port Lincoln; two staff members in Gawler, Para Hills and Berri; and one staff member in Port Pirie and Kadina. There is also apparently a non-voting member from finance and funding. From term 4, the panel will also include a preschool representative from either the Preschool Directors Association executive or a nomination from them; a primary school representative either from the South Australian Primary Principals Association or a nomination thereof; a secondary school representative either from the Secondary Schools Principals Association or a nomination thereof; and one from SA SEPLA. I think that answers the question.

**Dr CLOSE:** Thank you. I thank the people who have joined the minister to provide advice. My first question comes from Budget Paper 5, pages 28 and 29: just to confirm that there are no initiatives in this budget for early childhood.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** The member is looking at budget initiatives which—

**Dr CLOSE:** That is right.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Budget Paper 5 is obviously one where things of a certain scale involving financial changes between Treasury and the agency are able to be identified. However, Budget Paper 5 does not tend to deal with matters where the work of departments continues. Of course, while the initiatives that are outlined in those budget papers relate to other matters, there is an ongoing range of work that is always underway within the department. We are always looking to improve the work we do.

I remember last year we were in my office with Iram Siraj from the UK, who was out here working with our preschools and the department in what will eventually assist us to go to the next stage of our improvement strategy across the department. We want to support our preschools to do that. We are also constantly engaged with our Preschool Directors Association. The department is always on a cycle of constant improvement but in terms of new funding lines, we are working within our resources and, of course, there is also a range of engagements that we are undertaking with non-government organisations, some of which were talked about last year, and hopefully we will get the chance to talk about them a bit more today.

**Dr CLOSE:** Turning back one page to page 27, we have identified that there is a savings task of some \$48 million for the department. Can the minister rule out any of that \$48 million affecting the early childhood program?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I have already identified that one of the measures that is undertaken is harvesting, and that is in scope for all areas, including early childhood. I think what I said in an earlier answer in the previous session would apply in this session as well, and so I direct the member to my previous answer. We still have a substantial saving from the cost of the minister's office, which is helping the department as a whole.

**Ms HILDYARD:** Minister, in the same section, what role do you think local community-led, collaborative efforts of community members, community organisations, education and other government agencies, philanthropy and business can play in early childhood wellbeing?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** A very substantial role. The member has identified a large diversity of potential stakeholders in the area. Obviously, where people are supporting our children, whether it be in government or non-government organisations, we are grateful for that effort. I suspect the member is coming to another question which I imagine may be a bit more pointed, so I will let her do so.

**Ms HILDYARD:** Thank you, minister. What is your view also of co-investment by other organisations—private, public and philanthropic—in local place-based efforts focused on early childhood wellbeing and development?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** It sounds like a broad question and a very narrow question all at once. Conceptually we are obviously open to it. We have established four Clontarf academies across South Australia in our schools that identify resources from our state government, from the commonwealth government and from philanthropy. There are, of course, engagements with non-government organisations in some of the work that we are doing in early childhood as well. I think that answers the question.

**Ms HILDYARD:** Yes, thank you, minister. Given that, why did you discontinue education funding for the efforts of Together SA and for community-led, collective impact initiatives focused, and very successfully focusing, on early childhood development and wellbeing, focusing on areas of our state that desperately needed change in that area?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** The point that the member is making is that the program supported by the previous government is the only one capable of delivering an outcome and I challenge that assumption. Let me ask some advice—

**Ms HILDYARD:** It was not just supported by government. It was also supported by—

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Sorry, you asked a question and I am happy to answer it.

**The CHAIR:** Order! The minister has said that he will seek advice.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I am seeking some advice.

**The CHAIR:** I know the member for Reynell is new to this committee, but it has been very orderly this morning and it will continue like this all day.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I have sought advice from the acting executive director, the chief operating officer and the director of early childhood services. None of them immediately recalls the program that the member might be referring to having been supported by early years from the Department for Education. So if there was a particular program over particular years, we are happy to explore the detail of what that program involved and provide further information as necessary. If there was a program from early years in the education department, then we will get back to the house and the committee.

**Ms HILDYARD:** Minister, what other programs and initiatives with a specific focus on early childhood development and wellbeing contribute to the more than \$2 million cut to grants and subsidies? That is going to page 172.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I can help you with this. If you have a look on page 172, you have it right in front of you, you will notice that the 2017-18 actual figure is \$7.299 million. The 2018-19 budget figure was \$11.327 million. The 2019-20 budget is \$9.262 million. So it goes from seven to 11 to nine, and the advice I have is that the main variance relates to carryovers the department has yet to have approved. Effectively, as I understand it, there was some money that was supposed to be spent in 2017-18 that was not spent in that year—it was spent in the 2018-19 year—which made the 2018-19 year have a higher expense than would otherwise have been the case and then we are back to normal in 2019-20. In effect, the intent was in the order of \$9 million in all three years.

**Dr CLOSE:** My question relates to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 167. We started to have this conversation in the schools education section before the break about the staff who have been transferred to the Department of Human Services, and I appreciate that the minister read some detail which means that I do not need to ask as many questions. Can the minister tell me how many of the 231 and the 199.8 staff FTEs come from early childhood?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I will add that detail to the question that we took on notice in the earlier session.

**Dr CLOSE:** The minister referred before the break to an MOU that is yet to be finalised and, therefore, will presumably contain some of the answers. But what position has the minister taken in the guarantees that are required by education on the kind of service delivery and guarantee of not diminishing resources in the discussions with the human services department? What have you sought from entering into those negotiations and losing what is quite a considerable number of staff from the department?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** We are not transferring the money until the memorandum of agreement is entered into. It is worth understanding the context in which this has arisen. The Early Intervention Research Directorate, which was established under the former government but had not started to fully do its work before the election—I think it was quite late in the piece when it was established—has driven a lot of these recommendations.

Of course, the person heading up this unit is reasonably familiar with the needs of schools, particularly the early childhood settings in education, because it is Ann-Marie Hayes, who until quite recently was the executive director for early childhood within the education department. So I think it is more than fair to say that she is acutely aware of what the Department for Education's expectations are going to be going forward.

**Dr CLOSE:** Can you rule out that the resourcing, having been transferred in the future to the Department of Human Services, might be used for other purposes than it is currently being used?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I refer the member to my previous answer in which I made it clear this will be sorted out under the MOA.

**Dr CLOSE:** Will you seek to have that ruled out, minister?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I am saying we will be establishing our expectations in the MOA.

**Mr COWDREY:** My question is in regard to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 171, the highlights section at bullet point three. Minister, can you describe for the committee how the Inclusive Education Support Program for preschools assists children with disabilities in South Australia?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I thank the member for Colton for the question. I think the Inclusive Education Support Program is an important reform for the whole education department in ensuring that we best meet the needs of our students with disability and indeed for our schools and preschools across South Australia. Once it is fully established, I think it is our preschools that are going to benefit most substantially, or as substantially but they are certainly going to feel the benefits of this program once it is fully rolled out.

It is a simpler approach to supporting mainstream preschool and school students with a disability. It is aimed at reducing red tape to ensure funding transparency to provide resourcing certainty. This will lead to more timely and flexible strategies to support children and students to achieve and excel in their learning.

The new Inclusive Education Support Program commenced at the start of 2019 with an expanded range of new criteria which aligned with the nationally consistent collection of data on school students with disability. Funding supports for children or students with complex social, emotional, behaviour and healthcare needs are now included in the program.

For the first time, preschools have received an Inclusive Education Support Program (IESP) grant similar to schools. This means that preschool children requiring minor adjustments to their learning program do not have to be assessed or apply for the funding. It allows preschool leaders to identify their needs, to plan and employ staff for longer contracts due to a greater certainty of funding. They are not necessarily waiting around for months and months and months for the expert to come and assess the person. Bear in mind that when a lot of students are at preschool for a year that can be an extraordinary challenge for the preschool, because, of course, you get an assessment and then not long after that the child leaves. We are now able to give some certainty to preschools about their funding.

Assessments will only be required for a small number of children who require adjustments to an extensive level. Can I say that this is part of the program's key focus. While reducing red tape sounds like a great slogan, it is really important in this area because reducing red tape means getting an assessment and therefore an intervention much earlier. The people doing the assessments will not have to do as many assessments if the lower level ones can be guaranteed the funding without an assessment.

The new model also ensures that preschool children receiving extensive adjustments in the preschool setting can transition to school with the same or higher level of funding. This is another important part of the program because it is those transitions, whether it is between schools or between preschool and school, that are sometimes the places where the system finds it harder to work with. A person has a relationship with a preschool or a relationship with the school where their child goes, but a relationship with the system is a little bit further removed. So ensuring that some of

the supports in the system can follow a student from preschool to school will be a significant benefit to those students.

In term 3, preschools as well as schools and special options sites will be trained in the use of the new online application form, which will also, hopefully, make it much easier. The new form and process will be implemented from term 4 in 2019. So far, across preschools and schools, 31,000 students are being transitioned to the new model in 2019. We talked earlier about the feedback session where we looked at what the challenges are, and we are looking to address those.

Overwhelmingly, the information we have been provided has been positive from the sites, and we think it will get more positive as people become more familiar with the new program. Certainly, we are looking to hold further feedback sessions with preschool and school leaders this term, along with that training for the use of the new online application forms. We are very excited about what this IESP program will be able to do to support our schools and preschools better and, most importantly, our students, including the very young ones in preschools with a disability.

**Dr CLOSE:** If I can turn to page 171, where we start talking about the Early Childhood Development Program. There is a reference to the bilingual playgroup program. Is that a federally funded program, or is it now being funded by the state?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Give us a moment, because I am fairly sure that I had some information about this. I want to make sure we are absolutely accurate in the information we provide, so I will take that on notice.

**Dr CLOSE:** The larger issue of universal access, the 15 hours, what is the status of that for the federal government making its contribution? How many years ahead are we certain we will have it?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** We have that guaranteed until the end of next year. I think it is fair to say that the federal education minister is well and truly aware of my views and the views of other state ministers on the desirability of having a long-term arrangement settled. I think we are working towards that. There is, as a result of the commonwealth government's election commitments, a process which the Education Council is now working with that looks at the way these things are funded.

One of the challenges in this area is that the funding arrangements, in practice, end up being quite different from state to state. Some states, such as South Australia, have a very high number of service providers that are government preschools. I think in Queensland, Goodstart, which is a sort of non-government company provider type model, community-type model, but a very large one, from memory is if not the main provider certainly one of the main providers. In other states we are talking about councils.

In South Australia a lot of the early childhood education programs, the kindy programs, are increasingly being organised in non-government schools or in long day-care services that are also offering kindy. The ratio from state to state or territory is quite different from each other. One of the things that the commonwealth's review of how this works is going to look at is making sure that any long-term national partnership is done fairly, and that is a laudable goal.

That said, having a commitment to the commonwealth contribution to 15 hours is utterly desirable, and while the commonwealth is the one from whom we are asking for the money—and they are expecting that we are going to have this review first—we will have the review and we will support the review.

As the Education Council, I think that all the states and territories are as eager to get as good a review done as quickly as possible so that we can then move on to the good bit where we get the money locked in. That is the work we are doing, and it is one where all the states and territories are fairly consistent in our purpose that we want to lock that away.

**Dr CLOSE:** Still on page 171, at our last estimates we talked about the question of universal preschool for three year olds, and we discussed the fact that Lifting Our Game had been, at that point, fairly recently delivered to the Education Council. Has the minister had time to form a position about the desirability or otherwise of three-year-old preschool being universally offered?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Obviously, there are experts in the area who have fairly strong views on both sides of this case, I have to say. There are at the moment, as the member is aware, provisions for Aboriginal students and children under the guardianship of the Department for Child Protection to be able to access preschool at the age of three. It is really important that the advice I have received and the research I have read, as I understand it, is pretty unanimous in suggesting that for those cohorts, and potentially for some other vulnerable cohorts where that need is not currently met, there is an advantage for those three year olds to be in preschool.

In terms of getting the best bang for our buck in supporting our early childhood areas, a number of people have different views. I think the Preschool Directors Association is one that identifies a range of challenges as well with this suggestion. We are not looking towards universal access for three year olds at this stage under the model available for four year olds, but I am quite open-minded about there being a longer term discussion, and it is one of the things I am sure will happen at the Education Council about how we best meet the particular needs of our vulnerable cohorts.

**Dr CLOSE:** Can the minister direct me to any research that indicates that offering—clearly not compulsory—through your preschool, universally, has some negative impacts on students and children?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** The member can characterise the reflection I made about people who have advised in whatever way she likes. At the end of the day, I am identifying that there are people who are expert in the field who have suggested that their focus should be on meeting our vulnerable cohorts and providing universal access.

In fact, one person said to me, and I do not recollect who, but the point that they were making was that, if you provide universal access without the requisite infrastructure in place, for example, the first people who are going to take up the opportunity are not going to be the vulnerable cohorts that we are so focused on targeting. So we do need to make sure that we get the best bang for our buck when we are supporting young vulnerable South Australians, and that is going to be my focus.

**Dr CLOSE:** Has the minister had much consideration of the peer effect of not having children only learning in an environment with other very vulnerable children, that having vulnerable children with a more diverse socio-economic and advantaged background is beneficial? Has the minister turned his mind to that?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** If I were to get into a more philosophical discussion I am happy to do so, but I think the cause does not necessarily follow the outcome that the member is suggesting. I think that, at the moment, you have vulnerable cohorts. You have three year olds and four year olds, and they are in certain environments—children's centres, preschools potentially, long day-care services with early childhood options. Are they going to be the ones that would immediately benefit from having more three year olds come in who do not fit into those vulnerable cohorts? It depends what children's centre they are in. It may well be a situation where the children who are in those vulnerable cohorts will continue to attend the services that are full.

The member might remember there was some discussion when the federal Labor Party was suggesting a move towards three year olds having access to preschool. I do not think the federal Labor Party was ever suggesting they would pay for it other than the three hours a week, although I stand to be corrected. I certainly am advised they were not suggesting that they would pay for the infrastructure that would be needed to cater for the large number of other students. The point I was making was that without the infrastructure you would find that the first cohorts to take up that opportunity, I would suggest, are not necessarily cohorts you are seeking to assist.

**Ms HILDYARD:** Minister, on page 171, in relation to funding for community organisations for literacy and numeracy programs, can you please detail which organisations are receiving funding, how much funding and what methodology you will use to evaluate those programs and that funding?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** It is almost as if it was a question that could have been asked by any member of this committee, and I am really grateful for the opportunity—

**Ms HILDYARD:** I am very interested.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** —to answer this question because it is some terrific news. The government is, indeed, progressing with delivering evidence-based literacy and numeracy programs targeted at disadvantaged children in the early years before they get to school. We have agreements in place, and I actually have a feeling that there is one that is not listed here as well that the department might consider looking at, but I am pretty sure I gave a grant to an organisation to do some of this work fairly recently as well.

In addition to that, I can advise the committee right now about Raising Literacy Australia, which is giving support to The Little Big Book Club and The Smith Family to deliver their Let's Read and Let's Count programs across government and non-government early-learning settings. Last year, we agreed to support Raising Literacy Australia with \$1.52 million, excluding GST, over five years to 30 June 2023, to provide baby, toddler and preschool reading packs to South Australian families.

We also support the Read to Me Project, which is Raising Literacy Australia's project as well, which supports children in out-of-home care. That program has just received an extension to its agreement, which had been set to expire last month. The reading packs aim to develop early childhood reading and literacy skills by encouraging and supporting parents and caregivers to read regularly to their children from an early age. The Read to Me Project, which is the second one I outlined, provides a reading pack and users' guide for carers and residential care staff targeted to children up to preschool age under the guardianship of the minister.

The Smith Family will also receive \$720,000, excluding GST, over three years to deliver their Let's Read and Let's Count programs into disadvantaged communities, including The Smith Family Learning for Life communities within the cities of Onkaparinga, Port Adelaide, Playford, Salisbury, Port Augusta and Whyalla.

The Department for Education also provides services for families with young children, which focus on healthy child development, including literacy and numeracy development, through the Early Years Learning Framework, which guides early childhood educators in developing quality early childhood education programs, the children's centres and indeed the Learning Together programs that are delivered throughout the state. Learning Together operates within existing departmental services and works with parents to plan for and support children's learning. As I say, I am fairly sure there is another NGO that we have provided a smaller amount of support for as well, which is United Way.

**Ms HILDYARD:** How will you measure the impact of the programs that you have funded?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** The department obviously is keeping an eye on all of the programs that they run out. The funding agreements with non-government organisations always have a range of KPIs as appropriate to their funding agreements.

**Ms HILDYARD:** How will you measure the impact of the child and family intensive support systems? Specifically, what methodology will you use to measure the impact?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** The member asks about specific methodology. I think, to be safe, I will take that on notice.

**Ms HILDYARD:** If you are taking it on notice, that is fine, but can you explore in that question on notice exactly what methodology you will use to ensure that the application of the program has a positive impact on children's wellbeing and that it is assisting children to be safe, to be healthy, to be ready to learn and to be positively engaging?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I can advise the member—

**Ms HILDYARD:** You can add that to your—

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Well, no, I can answer the question. I am very happy to confirm that the government seeks that the programs we support assist our children's wellbeing, safety, happiness and all those other important things.

**Ms HILDYARD:** But how you will measure their effectiveness, I guess, is the question.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I already took that question on notice.

**Ms HILDYARD:** In relation to the same program, how is community informing and leading the implementation of that program?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Sorry, I am going to have to take that on notice.

**Dr CLOSE:** If I can now do the omnibus so that I do not miss out on doing the omnibus, and then we can come back to other comments:

1. For each department and agency reporting to the minister:
  - What is the actual FTE count at 30 June 2019 and the projected actual FTE count for each year of the forward estimates?
  - What is the total employment cost for each year of the forward estimates?
  - What is the notional FTE job reduction target that has been agreed with Treasury for each year of the forward estimates?
  - Does the agency or department expect to meet the target in each year of the forward estimates?
  - How many TVSPs are estimated to be required to meet FTE reductions over the forward estimates?
2. Between 1 July 2018 and 30 June 2019, will the minister list the job title and total employment cost of each position with a total estimated cost of \$100,000 or more which has either (1) been abolished and (2) which has been created.
3. Will the minister provide a detailed breakdown of expenditure on consultants and contractors above \$10,000 between 1 July 2018 and 30 June 2019 for all departments and agencies reporting to the minister, listing:
  - the name of the consultant, contractor or service supplier;
  - cost;
  - work undertaken;
  - reason for engaging the contractor, and
  - method of appointment?
4. For each department and agency for which the minister has responsibility:
  - How many FTEs were employed to provide communication and promotion activities in 2018-19 and what was their employment expense?
  - How many FTEs are budgeted to provide communication and promotion activities in 2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23 and what is their estimated employment expense?
  - The total cost of government-paid advertising, including campaigns, across all mediums in 2018-19 and budgeted cost for 2019-20.
5. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, please provide a full itemised breakdown of attraction and retention allowances as well as non-salary benefits paid to public servants and contracts between 1 July 2018 and 30 June 2019.
6. What is the title and total employment cost of each individual staff member in the minister's office as at 30 June 2019, including all departmental employees seconded to ministerial offices?
7. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, could you detail:
  - (a) How much was spent on targeted voluntary separation packages in 2018-19?
  - (b) What department funded these TVSPs? (except for DTF Estimates)

- (c) What number of TVSPs were funded?
- (d) What is the budget for targeted voluntary separation packages for financial years included in the forward estimates (by year), and how are these packages funded?
- (e) What is the breakdown per agency/branch of targeted voluntary separation packages for financial years included in the forward estimates (by year) by FTEs?
8. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, how many executive terminations have occurred since 1 July 2018 and what is the value of executive termination payments made?
9. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, what new executive appointments have been made since 1 July 2018, and what is the annual salary, and total employment cost for each position?
10. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, how many employees have been declared excess, how long has each employee been declared excess, and what is the salary of each excess employee?
11. In the 2018-19 financial year, for all departments and agencies reporting to the minister, what underspending on operating programs (1) was and (2) was not approved by cabinet for carryover expenditure in 2019-20?
12. In the 2018-19 financial year, for all departments and agencies reporting to the minister, what underspending on investing or capital projects or programs (1) was and (2) was not approved by cabinet for carryover expenditure in 2019-20? How was much sought and how much was approved?
13. For each grant program or fund the minister is responsible for please provide the following information for 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22 financial years:
- Name of the program or fund;
  - The purpose of the program or fund;
  - Balance of the grant program or fund;
  - Budgeted (or actual) expenditure from the program or fund;
  - Budgeted (or actual) payments into the program or fund;
  - Carryovers into or from the program or fund; and
  - Details, including the value and beneficiary, of any commitments already made to be funded from the program or fund.
14. For the period of 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019, provide a breakdown of all grants paid by the department/agency that report to the minister, including when the payment was made to the recipient, and when the grant agreement was signed by both parties.
15. For each year of the forward estimates, please provide the name and budgeted expenditure across the 2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23 financial years for each individual investing expenditure project administered by or on behalf of all departments and agencies reporting to the minister.
16. For each year of the forward estimates, please provide the name and budget for each individual program administered by or on behalf of all departments and agencies reporting to the minister.
17. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, what is the total cost of machinery of government changes since 1 July 2018 and please provide a breakdown of those costs?
18. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, what new sections of your department or agency have been established since 1 July 2018 and what is their purpose?



19. For each department and agency reporting to the minister:
- What savings targets have been set for each year of the forward estimates?
  - What measures are you implementing to meet your savings target?
  - What is the estimated FTE impact of these measures?

Can I turn to page 173 of Budget Paper 4, Volume 1?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Would you like me to take those last ones on notice?

**Dr CLOSE:** I would. I apologise for not allowing you to do that, minister; go ahead.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I thought it would be a kindness if I make sure that we do that, so I will take them on notice and I will bring back appropriate information at the appropriate time.

**Dr CLOSE:** Excellent. I would have been in trouble had you not. On page 173, I note that there are four preschools that are expected not to be in existence next year. In answering the question, if the answer is that they have been moved on site of a school rather than simply closed and not moved, I would like to know about the reporting arrangements, whether the director remains in charge or whether the principal has taken over.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I can advise that the decrease in four preschool services is due to one preschool service being closed and three being suspended in 2019. The East Murray Area School was closed at the end of 2018 after consultation with the local community about declining enrolments. As a result of the school's closure, the East Murray Area School-based preschool was also closed.

**Dr CLOSE:** That makes sense.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** That was something that I think had been coming for some time. That was a preschool to 12 school and it had a very small number of students who are now attending a couple of other not-too-distant schools. I think they had one SACE graduate last year, from recollection, but I stand to be corrected. Anyway, their preschool was the one that closed. Also, Robertstown Preschool, the Kenmore Park preschool and the Oodnadatta Preschool were suspended for 2019 as there were no projected enrolments of children for term 1 2019. That is the advice that I have received.

**Dr CLOSE:** Also on that page I see that there is an increase in cost per child in occasional care from \$832 to \$1,270. Can the minister briefly explain why that is?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I will endeavour to do so, but not today; I will take that on notice and bring back an answer to the member.

**Dr CLOSE:** I note a little further down that there is a drop in the number of children in family day care. It notes, 'The number of registered children in family day care continues to decline consistent with the national trend.' I wonder if the minister has any advice about why that is occurring.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** The information I have does not address that particular point, so I will again take that one on notice and bring back some advice.

**Dr CLOSE:** As part of that I would be interested to know if there is evidence that the children are going to another service provider of some sort or whether they are more likely to be staying at home. It might be hard to track, but I would be interested to know that level of detail.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I will happily incorporate that addendum to the earlier question taken on notice.

**Dr CLOSE:** I also have a question about the attendance and enrolment at preschool services. I believe the minister touched on this earlier, but I would like, if he has the opportunity, to flesh it out. Because South Australia has so many young people who go to preschool in government services but many of them are also attending long day care, they may well pick up some of their hours at their long day care when they are there for that day anyway.

I believe in the past it was quite difficult to match up so that it looked like students might not be attending preschool when in fact they were attending but just at a different service. It looked like they were missing for the half day. Has there been any progress in being able to track students so that we are more accurately reflecting whether they are getting their full 15 hours but perhaps across two services?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** We are continuing to work with the commonwealth to get advice from their data sets that might help us deal with that. Can I also identify that I have some information in relation to the declining number of children enrolled. The 2018-19 projection was 17,800 and the 2018-19 estimated result is 17,491, which is in line with the budget line the member has just identified.

Interestingly, the ABS population projections data indicates a slight decrease in the South Australian population of children eligible for preschool in 2019, with a forecasted drop of between 76 and 83 children. The decreasing enrolment numbers in government and non-government preschool services funded by the state government are being offset by an increase in enrolments and universal access per capita funded non-government preschool programs, which I think is basically what the member just said. The total number of enrolments across these three sectors is 20,000 children.

**Dr CLOSE:** As I seem to have time for one more question, can we return to page 167. We were having the conversation about the staff who have been moved to Human Services and the ongoing discussion. Can the minister inform me where CaFHS now sits and where the universal home visits sit? Are they reporting to Health, to Education or to this new entity?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I might ask the chief executive to reflect and we will see how he goes.

**Mr PERSSE:** CaFHS remains in Health and always did under the previous arrangements, as you will recall, shadow minister. That continues and now the agreement that we had operated with Health will have to be reset with DHS.

**Dr CLOSE:** So the agreement that existed with the education department will now exist with the—

**Mr PERSSE:** That is our understanding.

**Dr CLOSE:** Okay. Thank you.

**The CHAIR:** There being no further questions, I declare the examination of proposed payments for the portfolio of Early Childhood Development completed.

#### **Membership:**

Ms Stinson substituted for Ms Wortley.

Ms Cook substituted for Ms Hildyard.

#### **Departmental Advisers:**

Mr R. Persse, Chief Executive, Department for Education.

Ms J. Riedstra, Chief Operating Officer, Department for Education.

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

Ms K. Weston, Acting Executive Director, Early Years and Child Development, Department for Education.

Mr C. Vetere, Director, Budget and Finance, Department for Education.

Prof. M. Westwell, Chief Executive, SACE Board of South Australia.

Ms M. Watson, Acting Registrar, Education Standards Board.

**The CHAIR:** If we can please move to administered items. The minister appearing is the Minister for Education. I declare the proposed payments open for examination and refer members to the Agency Statements, Volume 1. Minister, if you could update your advisers, please.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** To my right is Rick Persse, who is the Chief Executive of the Department for Education; to my left is Peta Smith, who is the Acting Executive Director for Strategic Policy and External Relations, who deals with a lot of our administered items; to her left is Julieann Riedstra, who you have met before; behind me is Carmine Vetere, who is the Director, Budget and Finance, Department for Education; next to him is Karen Weston, who is the Acting Executive Director, Early Years and Child Development; and behind them, Martin Westwell, who is the Chief Executive of the SACE Board, who will probably be swapping seats with Peta in a little while; and Mel Watson, who is the Acting Registrar of the Education Standards Board.

**Ms STINSON:** Thank you, minister, and thank you to your officials for being here today. My question relates to Budget Paper 5, page 27, budget initiatives, operating savings. Of the \$472,000 per year that is identified to be cut here, what is the split between the three agencies: the History Trust, Carclew and Windmill Theatre?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** To be clear, the efficiency has been requested of the Department for Education in its role as administrative agency for those three organisations in the expectation of what the Department of Treasury and Finance provides us to support those organisations, and they are providing us \$472,000 less.

One of the key reasons and benefits of having those agencies assigned to the Department for Education is that, of course, a lot of the work they do is supporting our school students, young children and young people in child development across South Australia. We are having a very close look, at the moment, at the services those organisations provide to our children and young people and our schools, so that we can more adequately address accurately the funding models.

While there were existing savings to those agencies required of us by former budgets, some from last year's budget, a substantial amount in the 2017 Mid-Year Budget Review, which we discussed earlier at some length in another session, I do not think that this efficiency required from Treasury will end up having a significant, if any, impact on those three agencies, and we are working through that at the moment.

**Ms STINSON:** Has there been any determination about how that \$472,000 will be split up and saved across those three agencies or have you not decided yet how you are going to apportion it?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I encourage the member to read the *Hansard* of the answer I have just given. To answer it in a different way, to provide the same information in a different way: those agencies receive funding from the state government; it is administered through the Department for Education, and the Department of Treasury provides funding to the Department for Education to assist in the work that those agencies do. They also receive money from the Department for Education directly for certain purposes and, going forward, that money will probably increase to meet some of the support that they have been giving our schools and young people. In relation to the \$472,000, there is a reasonable likelihood that it will cover the vast majority if not all of that funding.

There is also the work that schools do, fee for service: for example, when children go to some of the agencies, the museums, there are different arrangements that they can come to. We also have a relationship with those agencies through the education officers who work in those organisations. There are some efficiencies that those agencies will have to deal with because of the existing budget savings that are determined and expected, but the \$472,000 figure is the efficiency that Treasury asks us to deal with.

In context, we were talking earlier about the savings in the ministerial office budget which, in the first full financial year of the Marshall Liberal government, I am informed, were actually larger than the efficiency that the member is talking about covering. So we are working towards making sure that it is covered because these are agencies that provide important benefits to our schoolchildren, every single one of them, whether it is through Carclew, Windmill, some of the

support that is given by Carclew to other agencies, and I particularly single out Patch, our early childhood performing arts agency.

Then there is the History Trust, which has an extraordinary range of activities that are very important. For example, one of the things that the History Trust is doing this year and coordinating, and one of the things that our government is supporting it to do, is in the centenary year of the flight of the Vickers Vimy, the first flight from England to Australia by the Smith brothers. The committee to celebrate that is auspiced under the History Trust and so there is a school essay competition. So those sort of things are taken into account as well; it is not as simple as saying that there is a split.

There is a split in terms of the \$472,000 efficiency required of us by Treasury but if you are asking about what impact the organisations will see of that, I have been speaking with the CEs and the boards of those organisations, and the education department has been working towards identifying the true costs and true value of what those organisations provide, and we are finding that it is very significant.

**Ms STINSON:** I realise that you are trying, and I am trying to understand what the answer is to this question. I will try to be a bit more specific about what I am after.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** May I offer one piece of information that might help clarify?

**Ms STINSON:** Sure, thank you.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** There is \$472,000, which is identified and, as I said, it is unlikely to see any impact because things will be paid for in a different way. There was an existing savings target for all of these organisations, prior to the election, left in the Mid-Year Budget Review in 2017 and earlier. I understand that none of these organisations had been told about that savings target prior to the 2018 election.

When we got in we were told that Arts SA, as they were then, had been assigned an efficiency by Treasury. We were told that Arts SA was working to manage that and hopefully it would not see any outcomes, but Treasury was expecting that there would be a savings there, and there was a slight increase to that applied in the 2018 budget.

So with those efficiencies, going forward, we have been able to support those agencies not to feel that impact because, of course, they do provide services to our schools, so in acknowledgement of that up to now we have supported that. Going forward, from 1 July 2020, those agencies will be working towards making sure that they have updated their models and their efficiencies so that they can meet that efficiency going forward. I am not anticipating that we will be having to add to that challenge as a result of this new Treasury efficiency on the education department.

**Ms STINSON:** So that I understand, are you saying that when the previous cuts are realised—I understand you are saying those are from past budgets—this will not need to be applied?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** This is being applied to the administered items budget in the education department, and we are meeting those challenges through other mechanisms. I have identified already, for example, a saving to the education department that is greater than this efficiency from the fact that my ministerial office underspent last year by half a million dollars. We no longer dragoon in seven staff from the education department offices into the minister's office. That is no longer an expense that the education department has to bear. Those sorts of efficiencies and others are being met.

We are not requiring Carclew, the History Trust and Windmill to stop offering the great services they do for our children in schools. For example, some of those efficiencies the organisations have already been working towards. There has been a restructure in the History Trust by way of example. The director of the National Motor Museum now has a shared role as director of the Maritime Museum, and that is an efficiency, and it is part of the History Trust restructure to ensure they will be able to meet their ongoing efficiency tasks going forward. Some of the money that that frees up in the shorter term is able to be spent on other projects, and that is a matter for the History Trust in that example.

**Ms STINSON:** On the History Trust change, are you saying that reducing that director position has come about because of previous budget decisions or is that in reaction to this budget decision? I had understood that that cut was being made because of this year's budget decision.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** My understanding is that it is the result of previous budget decisions. I stand to be corrected but I am pretty sure that I am not going to be. I think that that staff restructure was more than in discussions; it may have even been communicated with staff prior to this year's budget being released.

**Ms STINSON:** In light of that, are you expecting that there will be cuts to planned performances or exhibitions for any of these agencies as a result of this year's savings efficiencies?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I have met with the three organisations. They have their letters identifying the funding that will be available to them. I am advised they have not signalled any changes to planned performances. I was trying to think back to the meetings to see whether any of them had suggested it and I do not recall them doing so. Indeed, because of the work that was done to more accurately reflect the value to schools and the education department, particularly in the early years child development, some of these performing arts programs, for example, that value and cost is now being supported by the education department in some aspects.

**Ms STINSON:** Aside from the History Trust reorganisation, with that one director we discussed a moment ago, which I acknowledge you attributed—

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** There was a more significant reorganisation. That one director was the one that came to mind as an example.

**Ms STINSON:** My question is: will there be any staff cuts at the three organisations due to these cuts and, if so, which staff?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Not due to these cuts.

**Ms STINSON:** Will there be any cuts to community engagement or educational programs by these three organisations due to these most recently announced cuts?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** We, and the department, will continue to work with all three of the organisations. What happens in future years will be impacted potentially by the cuts from previous budgets which these organisations have been given the extra time to prepare for, and the example remains of the shared role now that is held by the director of the Maritime Museum and the National Motor Museum, that sort of restructure that has happened at the History Trust. But as I said, that was a pre-existing budget restructure to meet the historical efficiencies that were required by Treasury.

**Ms STINSON:** Thank you. You mentioned the letters that have gone to each agency. What figures are given to each of the three agencies in those letters in terms of their savings targets for this financial year? I am happy for you to take it on notice if you do not have them.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Those letters identify the operating grants or whatever the equivalent is, if it is not described as an 'operating grant'. They also describe some of the supplementary funding that will be provided to reflect the benefits that they give to the education department. In terms of cuts, I do not think that there is—

**Ms STINSON:** Or savings targets.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I do think there is a savings target identified for this financial year.

**Mr McBRIDE:** I have a question that refers to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 191, cash outflows, supplies and services, SACE Board. Last year was the first time that the SACE had a stage 2 electronic exam. Minister, could you explain that this will continue in 2019 and be progressed into the future?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I thank the member for MacKillop for his interest here. This is a really important question coming from a regional MP, of course, because one of the significant cohorts of students that we hope will benefit the most from electronic exams is students in regional

and rural South Australia. It is important that we make sure that the infrastructure is up to scratch for those students at those schools. We are rolling out our fibre-optic cable to schools across South Australia as part of our internet improvements. I note that in the member for MacKillop's area—I think Naracoorte was the most recent, joining Bordertown, which previously had fibre-optic cable rolled out to those schools—for some of those towns, that is going to be a great benefit to the broader community as well.

Electronic assessment is particularly important in regard to SACE. It is a key priority from the SACE Board's Strategic Plan 2016-2020. It represents a shift from traditional paper-based methods of submitting hardcopy student materials, marking and moderating this work on paper, enabling students to demonstrate their learning in digital ways. This strategy culminates in providing a technological solution that allows students to participate in an electronic examination. It recognises the ways that students use computers in their learning and everyday lives in this day and age.

As the nature of teaching and learning continues to evolve as technology opens up new forms of learning and creative expression, SACE examinations are also able to evolve. There are things you can do on a computer that you cannot do with pen and paper. We can assess things in new ways as well as being able to do so more quickly and efficiently. We can assess things more creatively. We can maximise the opportunities for students to demonstrate what they have learned, how they can use it in unrehearsed situations and the extent to which they have developed the capabilities that the SACE expects our students to develop.

The successful delivery of the first electronic examination for stage 2 English Literary Studies was last year—leading the nation—on 7 November; 2,070 students from 115 schools undertook that exam. There was an intense body of work to make sure the schools were ready, to make sure that SACE was ready. The program team worked in partnership with schools to prepare for the changes, the technical requirements needed to deliver the exam. Workshops, school visits, extensive engagement, communications and online training assisted schools in their preparation. I am really grateful to all of the school principals and the subject leaders in English Literary Studies who made sure their students were prepared.

Following the exam, the program sought and received feedback from stakeholder groups, including students, SACE coordinators, invigilators and IT managers. There were also focus groups, where a number of students participated with the members of the program team and the chief executive. Feedback received from the surveys and the focus groups is being utilised for the 2019 plan, where this will continue and, indeed, will be expanded to include Modern History and Psychology in addition to the existing English Literary Studies, which will continue as well. Three subjects this year, and we are looking to continue to explore the functionality that will be required to deliver further examinations in future years. The SACE Board will provide advice in due course when it is in a position to do so.

The team is continuing to work with a third-party vendor on final acceptance of the electronic examination platform. In April of this year the SACE Board facilitated a broad electronic assessment conversation with representatives of other states and territories and, indeed, the department in New Zealand to foster information sharing, greater collaboration and innovation. Of course, all other jurisdictions are facing similar challenges, and they are looking to South Australia to see how it rolls out. These meetings are going to occur regularly into the future.

**Dr CLOSE:** Excellent, good to hear that that project is going so well. I have not only the interest of having been the minister initially but also in children who are heading towards experiencing it.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Are they doing the three subjects?

**Dr CLOSE:** You will get feedback, I am sure. They are not quite at that stage yet, but they are getting very close. I would like to ask a question relating to the SACE, and therefore refer to page 167. Can the minister confirm that the SACE Board has a fund that it can only use if it has permission from cabinet, Treasury, to expend that fund?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I will invite the chief executive to answer that question.

**Prof. WESTWELL:** Each year when we make savings, those savings go into our reserves, and those reserves are not available to the SACE Board without approval from the Treasurer, as I understand it.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** And I think that reflects the longstanding arrangement.

**Dr CLOSE:** That is right. Has the SACE Board asked permission to spend any of those funds in the last year and been denied?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** There was never an explicit application to do so. Obviously, whenever we are talking about doing new things, if the government were to expect that then that is one of the options we can consider. There has not been a formal approach in any way to do so.

**Dr CLOSE:** Can the minister or the chief executive give an update on the progress with having SACE taught internationally?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** It is a good news story. As the member would know, the SACE International program has been going since 1982. In line with the SACE Board's 2016-2020 strategic plan, and supported by myself as the minister and I suspect the shadow minister when she was minister, certainly since Professor Westwell has been Chief Executive of the SACE Board I have been really pleased with the way the SACE Board has been working to enhance this program.

The total number of students enrolled in SACE International in 2016 was 706; 2017 was 774; 2018 was 779; and for 2019, enrolments or estimates based on anticipated commencement dates—not all schools around the world start on the same day—we are looking for a figure between 800 and 900. The anticipated gross revenue from SACE International activities in 2017-18 was \$902,000 and in 2018-19 was \$1,087,000 million, or is anticipated to end up there. Obviously, there are significant benefits to the state from encouraging students into South Australia to do SACE International, or familiarising them with South Australia through their doing SACE in their home countries.

**Dr CLOSE:** Absolutely. Can the minister tell me how much is in the SACE reserves, and how much of that has come from SACE International, if that is possible?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I invite the chief executive to answer that question.

**Prof. WESTWELL:** The revenue we receive from SACE International goes into our budget, and we actually use it to support the work we do with some of the innovations of the SACE Board.

**Dr CLOSE:** But how much is in the reserves?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** The reserves we might take on notice, but noting that, as the chief executive has just said, the presupposition of the earlier question is incorrect because the international revenue just goes straight into the budget.

**Dr CLOSE:** I absolutely understand that. Can the minister say whether he has formed a view about the impact of the ATAR on the decision by students to undertake specialist maths in particular?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I have some concerns in this area, as the shadow minister is aware, and I know that she shares them because we talked about it, and I think it was a positive discussion. This is an area where the SACE Board provides advice from time to time. Our universities provide advice, and we get feedback from schools.

There is certainly, I would suggest, anecdotal evidence if nothing else, and I am fairly certain that there is a lot heavier evidence than that, that some students are choosing not to do what they perceive as more difficult subjects for fear of that having a negative impact on their ATAR. That is why I believe a number of our universities are working with SATAC and the SACE Board, and particularly schooling systems and schools, to suggest novel ways of university entry.

I think some universities have described programs where they have offered entry pathways prior to the commencement of year 12 and prior to students making their final subject choices, and the universities have expressed a preference that, if a student wants to get into a certain course, they might be able to do so, so long as they do certain subjects, and the university will not necessarily

judge them on their ATAR so long as they achieve a certain standard in those subjects. It is a philosophical discussion, and I am not sure it is directly relevant to the budget line, but it is certainly part of the conversation. I think it is a useful discussion to have and a worthy use of the committee's time, so I thank the member for the question.

**Ms STINSON:** I refer to Budget Paper 5, page 27. Following on from the earlier questions from me, I just want to be clear about this from my understanding of what your answer was previously. Am I correct in understanding that although this \$472,000 per year is in the budget papers as an efficiency each year, you do not expect to enforce that?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** The \$472,000 indicates a reflection of what Treasury is providing us in our administration and support for these organisations. Separate to that, there are also previous identified efficiencies that impact on what Treasury provides to the education department or whoever else—Arts SA, as it previously was—and then there is a relationship between these organisations and the department. Currently, it is the Department for Education, previously, the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, and I am pretty sure it was somebody else before that previously.

In terms of the support that these organisations will receive from the agency that is currently responsible for them, they will continue to receive support along a similar line to what they had last year, notwithstanding that they know that they have to deal with these efficiencies that are longstanding.

**Ms STINSON:** Is it possible to get a copy of the letters that we spoke about earlier that have been sent to each of the agencies?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I do not think it is usual practice for me to give them out; they are a letter from me to the agencies. It may well be that the member can avail herself of the usual format to get them and I suspect that that might achieve the letter in an earlier time than estimates responses would be able to get to her, so she might like to avail herself of that mechanism.

**Ms STINSON:** Sure. I was also going to ask a few questions relating to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 166. My questions relate to the Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People. I understand that, from an answer you so kindly provided as a response to a question on notice earlier this year, this commissioner cannot investigate individual cases. Could you tell me what key performance indicators the commissioner does have and whether, for example, you have received any issues-based reports from the commissioner since she started her role?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I can go into some detail but, to enable the opposition to have at least one more question in this round, I will take that on notice and provide full information in due course rather than providing an answer now.

**Ms STINSON:** Thank you very much. Your response may be the same to my next question, which is in relation to the Guardian for Children and the Young People. Of course, the guardian does investigate individual cases and I am wondering how many cases have been referred to you, as minister, in the time that the guardian has been in your purview.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I make the point that the guardian's role is a bit different to the Commissioner for Children and Young People. In terms of the functional role, the guardian is more aligned with the Minister for Child Protection. We are responsible in the education department; the oversight bodies act is committed to us, so we have some relationship which is largely as a funding body and a landlord, if you like, for the Guardian for Children and Young People.

**Ms STINSON:** Does she report to you, or do the reports generally go straight to the other minister?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** To assist the member, I will take it on notice to the extent, then, in relation to clearing up for the member the manner of the reporting lines.

**Ms STINSON:** Thank you. I appreciate it.

**The CHAIR:** There being no further questions, I declare the examination of proposed payments for the portfolio administered items completed.



**Membership:**

Ms Wortley substituted for Ms Stinson.

**Departmental Advisers:**

Mr R. Persse, Chief Executive, Department for Education.

Mr D. Coltman, Chief Executive, TAFE SA.

Ms B. McKenzie, Chief Financial Officer, TAFE SA.

Ms C. Feszczak, Director, Further Education and Pathways, Department for Education.

**The CHAIR:** If we could please move to the portfolio of TAFE SA and Higher Education. We have the Minister for Education appearing. I declare the proposed payments open for examination and refer members to the Agency Statements, Volume 4. Minister, when you are ready, if you could please update your advisers.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I thank you for the opportunity to talk about TAFE in the parliament. I think it is a tremendously important organisation—

**The CHAIR:** Minister, if you could just please update your advisers for the committee.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** The new Chief Executive of TAFE SA, responsible for delivering our Fresh Start for TAFE SA and hitting the ground running—we are very grateful for that work—is David Coltman, who sits to my left. To his left is Beth McKenzie, the new Chief Financial Officer for TAFE SA, and we have very much appreciated the work she has done since coming on board. To my right is Clare Feszczak, Director, Further Education and Pathways, Department for Education. Behind me is Rick Persse, who is the Chief Executive.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you, minister. If you have an opening statement?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I am happy to give all time to questions.

**Dr CLOSE:** Thank you, and I have not yet met the new chief executive, so it is good to meet in person, if at a distance. I refer to Budget Paper 5, and the pages are 94 and 95 that relate to TAFE. My first question relates to the decision not to close some campuses, having in last year's budget suggested that five would be closed. What has been the budget impact of that recently announced reversal?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I invite the chief executive to answer that directly.

**Mr COLTMAN:** Through the minister, thank you for the warm welcome. In response to your question, we have been able to achieve the budget savings through other measures, which have included reducing our footprint on the campuses and working with other providers to ensure a more efficient delivery model.

**Dr CLOSE:** Part of that then comes to the next question around the MOU that has been signed with the group of non-government providers. How is the cost differential between TAFE and most courses that are provided by non-government providers going to be managed in offering students a choice on the same campus? How has that been explored in discussions?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I am not entirely sure that by asking that question the shadow minister is accurately reflecting on the nature of the MOU. We do have already on certain TAFE campuses, prior to the MOU, other providers offering services that are similar to or I think could even be described as in competition with TAFE SA. The most obvious example is at Regency, where not only is TAFE SA offering services using those facilities, so is Le Cordon Bleu and so is the ICHM—I will use the acronym so I do not get one of the words wrong. It is either hotel or hospitality management and I always get it wrong; I am glad I have drawn attention to that.

The MOU sets out a process for going forward but, to be clear, we are talking about TAFE facilities. TAFE SA will work with ITECA and non-government providers, particularly where it benefits TAFE SA and the people of South Australia to do so. I think it is useful to have South Australian taxpayer resources used to their full extent, but through the management of TAFE SA, which is of course our public training provider. I will just check if there is anything I have missed there and I might invite the chief executive to add some further detail.

**Mr COLTMAN:** Just to add, the MOU sits at a framework for discussion over the coming year about how we might work together. It is not prescriptive in that extent. It identifies four areas that the two parties will work together on: one is professional development for vocational education staff, irrespective of their employer. Another is around facilities and the use of facilities where we have capacity in both directions, so we may be using the facilities of private training providers to deliver courses if we have an unmet training need. The third focuses on the scope of delivery so that we understand whether the programs as required or the training skills as required in the state are being met by all providers, and the fourth relates to the joint policy priorities for vocational education going forward at both the state and federal level.

**Dr CLOSE:** I appreciate that it is probably not articulated in the MOU, but is there a view that has been formed within TAFE SA or by you, minister, on how many students you expect to see who are receiving training from non-government providers being on TAFE campuses? Do you have a quantum?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** No targets.

**Dr CLOSE:** No targets? Okay.

**Ms WORTLEY:** On Budget Paper 5, pages 94 and 95, minister, can you tell us today who currently owns the TAFE SA site?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Sorry, can you ask the question again, please?

**Ms WORTLEY:** Who owns the Gilles Plains TAFE SA site?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I believe that is one of the sites that is being transferred from Renewal SA to TAFE SA. I will correct the record if that is mistaken. We do not have it at our fingertips here, but everyone seems to believe that is the case. It is by land titles, currently with Renewal SA. I think all of those sites are anticipated to be transferred back to TAFE SA.

**Ms WORTLEY:** So that includes the Gilles Plains TAFE site?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I am talking about the Gilles Plains TAFE site.

**Mr COWDREY:** My question is in regard to Budget Paper 4, Volume 4, page 95, highlights, bullet point 4. Can the minister provide an update on the establishment of the TAFE Academic and Quality Committee?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I am really pleased to do so because this goes to the heart of one of the government's key election commitments, which was to provide A Fresh Start for TAFE SA. We have so much confidence in TAFE SA's future and we need to because it is an important asset for the wellbeing of our young people in South Australia seeking the skills to develop their careers, for adults who seek to reskill to get new careers and indeed for the prosperity of our state through our businesses and industry seeking to be able to fill their skills needs.

In doing that, we have to have the confidence in the academic and the quality side of TAFE as well. Our election policy was that TAFE governance and the quality of training will be further improved through the establishment of an academic board reporting to the TAFE SA board. This academic board will have a critical role in ensuring the expectations of industry are being met through its engagement with the new industry skills council.

In accordance with our election promise, the fresh start for TAFE SA strategy, TAFE SA has indeed established the Academic and Quality Committee. I note that it is also a reflection of recommendations in the Nous review and the Moran-Bannikoff review, commissioned by the member for Port Adelaide when she was the minister. I think it was amongst many excellent comments,

statements and recommendations made in those reports, and I am happy to reflect on them more if the committee would like me to.

In relation particularly to the Academic and Quality Committee, it commenced its full operation in February 2019. It is a subcommittee of the TAFE SA Board. It meets monthly and provides oversight on TAFE SA's scope of registration. It also provides advice to the TAFE SA Board on compliance and quality matters relating to quality teaching and learning. It oversees the conduct and outcome of courses and qualifications provided by TAFE SA to raise quality standards beyond just compliance and beyond just ticking the box to ensure that we are not only meeting the requirements of the national training package but actually delivering on what industry and businesses in South Australia need from our graduates of TAFE SA. To ensure that their needs are being met, it engages with industry and employers to ensure that TAFE SA is indeed meeting their needs.

To date, the academic quality council has overseen preparation for the re-registration process with the Australian Skills Quality Authority and the review of TAFE SA's scope of registration 2019. The committee consists of board members Dr Craig Fowler, who has recently held the position of Managing Director for the National Centre for Vocational Education Research, and Ms Jo Denley, who is highly experienced in human resources and risk management. I think the shadow minister and I fell over ourselves in giving her credit for a lot of good work last year, but she has been a longstanding and experienced member of the TAFE Board who has added significant value to the organisation and, particularly at a time of high stress, has performed above and beyond.

Judy Curran is another TAFE Board member on the committee who has extensive executive experience across a wide range of health and community services. They are joined on the committee by Mr Allyn Radford, an independent consultant with Transforming Credentials. He has been nominated by the TAFE SA Board to fulfil the role of industry representative on the Academic and Quality Committee, commencing from 1 July. He is new and we are excited and grateful for his service to the people of South Australia, and this is a service to the people of South Australia.

TAFE SA executives are also attending meetings as and when required. I think this committee will do an excellent job fulfilling the purpose not only that we saw for it in our election commitment but that the Nous Group saw for it in their review of the issues two years ago, as did the Moran Bannikoff review as well.

**Ms WORTLEY:** Minister, does the government intend to close the Gilles Plains TAFE site to sell it, relocate it or privatise it?

**The CHAIR:** Member for Torrens, which line item in the budget are you referring to?

**Ms WORTLEY:** Once again, it is Budget Paper 5, pages 94 and 95.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** A firm no.

**Ms WORTLEY:** In relation to the Gilles Plains TAFE site, can you tell me what infrastructures are unique to that campus?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I do not have the details of the site here. They do work across a range of courses. My recollection from previous briefings is that it is a site that has reasonably strong levels of demand.

**Ms WORTLEY:** Can I just interrupt?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** No, you cannot. I mean, you can interrupt if you want, but if you are asking for permission to interrupt I am still answering the question.

**Ms WORTLEY:** You did not have the answer you told me.

**The CHAIR:** I must be redundant to this morning's deliberations. It is unparliamentary to interrupt.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** How about I finish my answer there and you can ask another question.

**Dr CLOSE:** I refer to Budget Paper 5, pages 94 and 95. If there are no plans for closure or sale of the Gilles Plains TAFE, why does the Renewal SA website have a map showing plans to rezone the campus as residential, with open space marked for the site of the TAFE?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I am not sure what document the member is looking at, but the answer that I have given is based on the advice that I have received. My recollection of maps of that area outline the TAFE site in a different way but, as I said, I am not sure which document the member is looking at. The answer that I have given stands: it is being transferred to TAFE SA and TAFE SA has not chosen to close it.

Can I say that, when I have discussed this with colleagues who are interested in that area of land, I am not aware of anyone suggesting that they were planning on seeking to sell the TAFE SA land. As to what manner of zoning it might have, I am not familiar with that, but I have been given no advice that TAFE SA will not be able to continue operating out of that site for any of those reasons. I will just check if there is any further information. I am advised that the information I provided to the committee is accurate.

**Dr CLOSE:** Has the minister been made aware by Renewal SA or by the Renewal SA minister that it has issued a contract to AECOM services to conduct a site survey of the campus?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** To who, sorry?

**Dr CLOSE:** AECOM services, a private company—to conduct a site survey of the campus that was issued in May of this year. It is a substantial size document but page 163 states:

AECOM Australia...was engaged to undertake a Preliminary Site Investigation...at the Gilles Plains TAFE SA...It is understood that the PSI is intended to support rezoning of the site to residential and is to be provided to potential purchasers as part of the due diligence process.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** The question at the beginning of that was, 'Was I made aware? Was I told?' What was the question?

**Dr CLOSE:** Were you made aware either by Renewal SA or by the minister for Renewal SA that they were entering into a contract to do a site investigation that would be provided to potential purchasers of the land for residential purposes?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I will take that on notice. I am not aware of having been given information such as the member for Port Adelaide describes.

**Dr CLOSE:** Will the minister now seek assurance from Renewal SA that it will not be selling the TAFE campus and seek to have it zoned residential, so that it can continue to operate as a TAFE campus?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I am very pleased to direct the member to the budget line from which she is drawing this question, which identifies that this campus along with the others is being transferred from Renewal SA to TAFE SA, so I do not need to ask permission for what Renewal SA is doing with that land, as I understand, because—

**Dr CLOSE:** You think it is coming, though you were not sure that it was coming to you.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** This has gotten very exciting in this room since TAFE has been talked about. I think we can talk more about TAFE. We should talk about it in House of Assembly question time from time to time. We might have to organise some questions and the shadow minister might even ask some from time to time.

**Dr CLOSE:** It might help to have the renewal minister there too.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** The fact is that the budget actually sets it out. The assets are being transferred from Renewal SA to TAFE SA, and we have answered the question that Gilles Plains campus of TAFE SA is going to be continuing and that is our expectation.

**Dr CLOSE:** In Budget Paper 4, Volume 4, pages 92 and 98, there is reference to FTE reductions that have occurred. Who left TAFE SA in the last year, and what was the TVSP cost for that?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** For the financial year to June 2019—so I may miss a couple of weeks at the end of the financial year—there were 86.72 FTE or 99 employees who accepted TVSPs. Exits occurred from May through to August. I appreciate that is over the edge of the financial year, but I will provide the information as we have it; 36 FTE from the education side, which was 42 employees; 44.2 FTE from administrative support, which was 50 employees; and 6.5 FTE that were weekly paid, which was seven employees. Two of those TVSPs relate to excess employees. TAFE SA undertook several internal reviews including the student engagement transformation, foundation skills, tourism and hospitality, business, justice and IT, and facilities and procurement. TVSPs were offered to employees through these processes. I think that answers—that is all the information I have.

**Dr CLOSE:** There is reference to TAFE being part of the larger effort by this government to train 20,800 apprentices and trainees, on top of the baseline, over the period of the four years. What share of that 20,800 additional apprentices and trainees has TAFE set as its goal to train?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** We have responsibility to deliver at least 25 per cent of that for 2018-19 to 2021-22. In 2018-19, TAFE SA exceeded the targets for pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeships and traineeships, as well as meeting 78 per cent of the TAFE SA higher apprenticeship target. TAFE SA will continue to actively drive apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities which align with the training profile to meet the social and economic needs of the state. I would probably characterise that 25 per cent as a minimum. Obviously, there will be some areas of the training profile where it will be far in excess of that.

We will be working very hard to ensure that TAFE SA is delivering training packages that employees, staff members, apprentices and trainees who are seeking to enhance their skills will be desiring to use, and also which businesses will be desiring to use. There is also work that they do in partnership with groups like the MTA and other group training organisations. I think there is a great opportunity with a \$200 million Skilling South Australia fund to enhance training across both TAFE SA and non-government providers.

**Mr McBRIDE:** My question refers to Budget Paper 4, Volume 4, page 93. Can the minister provide an update on TAFE SA's commitment to rural and regional South Australia?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I am really pleased to receive this question. I know that the member for MacKillop and the member for Narungga are both passionate about this issue. It is one that they both talk to me about regularly and as they are both here I am very pleased to take the question. The member for MacKillop has raised issues with me personally that are pertinent in his electorate, particularly reflecting on his own experiences as a student at TAFE, as a tradie, as a businessperson and as an employer, so I know he has a full understanding.

I particularly appreciate the work the member for Narungga has also done in this area. Kadina TAFE I think was the one we most recently discussed and the opportunities to enhance that and to enhance the connections between schools and TAFE. This is not just a rural and regional issue, this is an issue across our education system where we really want those partnerships to be strong. I think it is particularly important in rural and regional areas where you might have one high school and TAFE is so often the key training provider these people in these areas are working with to meet the skills needs for businesses and industries in those areas.

As we look towards A Fresh Start for TAFE SA, a key feature of that renewal must be a strong and meaningful commitment to the state's regions, to provide training solutions that support local delivery and economic growth. I am really pleased to advise the committee that the TAFE SA board, with the exception of Jo Denley who has been there for some time, are all new. The new TAFE SA board has also committed to regularly visit the state's regions, to meet with leaders from local governments, businesses and employers to get firsthand insight into the training and skilling needs of those rural and regional communities.

I can advise the committee that the board is today in Mount Gambier for their July board meeting. They are missing Mr Coltman deeply, as I understand it, but they are functioning without him. They will be covering a number of topics, including building on TAFE SA's regional activities and also taking the opportunity again to engage with local industry, employers and the regional community more broadly.

In the coming financial year, TAFE SA is looking to undertake a full review of its regional program delivery and to improve regional considerations and program delivery. There are already facility improvements underway. Recently completed projects at TAFE campuses in regional areas included the reinvigoration of the Mount Gambier campus at a cost of \$4.3 million in the last financial year. That project supported students' needs for increased collaboration, integrated technologies, informal and formal learning and the interconnection of spaces with an overall focus on user experience. That project was completed in June, I am advised.

I really appreciated the opportunity to visit that campus with the member for Mount Gambier not so long ago, at which stage they were very excited because I think they were about to be shifting enormous amounts of furniture to enable that to take place. They could see the way that that would integrate with what the community needed. The staff of the campus were working very closely with the students to deliver that.

There is also a revitalisation being looked at this year for Whyalla which will improve campus functionality. There is a \$950,000 commitment towards the Murray River Regional Study Hub in this financial year. TAFE SA is leading the transformation of the site—I think this is the Murray Bridge campus, in effect—into a whole-of-community adult learning campus, with the potential for multiple local tenants.

The project will strengthen the regional economy and improve local opportunity through the establishment of a higher education centre, supporting growth sectors in the regional economy by linking the needs of industry to a collaborative network of universities and training providers, supporting business to improve enterprise and management skills to generate a more diverse and robust economy, and expanding South Australia's international student competitiveness through the provision of courses and student accommodation. That is due for completion in December.

Students from across the seven RDA areas, not including Adelaide, comprise about 38 per cent of students enrolled in Australian Qualifications Framework qualifications at TAFE. TAFE is working very hard to better connect with the needs of the state's regions to enable its regional managers, who are aligned with RDA regions, to actively develop relationships with communities, businesses, councils, industries and schools so that TAFE SA can better tailor and deliver its training for regional South Australia. That work is only going to be enhanced in the years ahead.

**Dr CLOSE:** I return to page 93 of Budget Paper 4, Volume 4. We were talking about TAFE's contribution to the government's commitment to the 20,800 apprenticeships and traineeships. I am interested that these terms 'pre-apprenticeship' and 'pre-traineeship' have come in. Can the minister inform me what proportion of the 20,800 are anticipated not to be apprenticeships or traineeships but to be the pre-apprenticeships?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I do not think that is necessarily a fair characterisation. At any rate, it is a question for the Minister for Innovation and Skills who is responsible for that budget line.

**Dr CLOSE:** What proportion of the 25 per cent that you are expecting TAFE to contribute to the 20,800 additional places that have been called apprenticeships and traineeships will in fact be pre-apprenticeships and pre-traineeships?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I will take that on notice.

**Dr CLOSE:** What is the target for international students at TAFE over the next few years?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** I will provide the information I can. TAFE SA is committed to diversifying its income through international student recruitment. I am advised that in 2018-19 there were 804 international students enrolled at TAFE SA, which contributed to TAFE's total international student revenue, growing by 1.5 per cent from \$7.8 million to \$7.9 million compared to the previous financial year. This growth is mainly due to the increased popularity of higher education courses, particularly the Bachelor of Tourism, Hospitality and Events Management, and the five associate degrees in engineering, along with Certificate III in Light Vehicle Mechanical Technology.

I am advised TAFE SA is currently focusing on attracting new business from China, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Vietnam, Indonesia, Cambodia, South Korea, India and Latin America. They continue to collaborate with Study Adelaide which promotes TAFE SA, and the VET sector more broadly, to

an international audience amongst other things. I am further advised that there has been some substantial decline over the last three years, so the focus for TAFE SA is to stabilise that decline.

**Dr CLOSE:** When was the decision taken to move TAFE campuses from Renewal SA to TAFE SA?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** That is part of the budget process, and the member is fully aware—

**Dr CLOSE:** Sorry, was it in this budget or was it in last year's budget?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Just to clarify, to move them from Renewal SA to TAFE SA?

**Dr CLOSE:** Yes.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** That was part of this year's budget. I am happy to provide some further information. I am told that the Renewal SA website notes plans in Gilles Plains but no change to TAFE operations in the foreseeable future, which I understand is consistent with what I said before. We have a minute or two left, so if there are no questions from the opposition I am happy to read to the committee quotes from some of the TAFE SA reviews, which I think would be of benefit to the people of South Australia to learn about. Do we have further questions?

**Ms WORTLEY:** Just one in relation to the Gilles Plains TAFE again.

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** So no further quotes from the Moran-Bannikoff review and the Nous review then.

**Ms WORTLEY:** How far is the foreseeable future in response to what you have just said?

**The Hon. J.A.W. GARDNER:** Given that Renewal SA is losing ownership of the sites and they are coming to TAFE SA, it directly goes to the questions that you asked before and which I answered before.

**The CHAIR:** Alas, time has expired. There being no further questions, I declare the examination of proposed payments for the portfolios TAFE SA and Higher Education, and the estimated payments for the Department for Education and administered items for the Department for Education completed.

*Sitting suspended from 13:30 to 14:30.*

## **DEPARTMENT FOR CHILD PROTECTION, \$568,780,000**

### **Membership:**

Mr Odenwalder substituted for Dr Close.

Mr Brown substituted for Ms Cook.

### **Minister:**

Hon. R. Sanderson, Minister for Child Protection.

### **Departmental Advisers:**

Ms C. Taylor, Chief Executive, Department for Child Protection.

Ms J. Browne, Chief Financial Officer, Department for Child Protection.

Ms F. Ward, Deputy Chief Executive, Department for Child Protection.

Ms G. Ramsay, Chief Human Resource Officer, Department for Child Protection.

Mr T. Rich, Parliament and Cabinet Coordinator, Department for Child Protection.

**The CHAIR:** Good afternoon. The estimates committee is a relatively informal procedure and, as such, there is no need to stand to ask or answer questions. I understand that the minister and the lead speaker for the opposition have agreed to an approximate time for the consideration of proposed payments, which will facilitate a change of departmental advisers. Can the minister and the lead speaker for the opposition confirm that the timetable for today's proceedings is accurate?

**Ms STINSON:** Yes.

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** Yes.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you. Changes to committee membership will be notified as they occur. Members should ensure that the Chair is provided with a completed request to be discharged form. If the minister undertakes to supply information at a later date, it must be submitted to the Clerk Assistant via the answers to questions mailbox no later than Friday 5 September 2019.

I propose to allow the minister and the lead speaker for the opposition to make opening statements of about 10 minutes each, should they wish. There will be a flexible approach to giving the call to ask questions based on about three questions per member, alternating each side. Supplementary questions will be the exception rather than the rule.

A member not on the committee may ask a question at the discretion of the Chair. Questions must be based on lines of expenditure in the budget papers and must be identifiable or referenced. Members unable to complete their questions during the proceedings may submit them as questions on notice for inclusion in the assembly *Notice Paper*.

There is no formal facility for the tabling of documents before the committee; however, documents can be supplied to the Chair for distribution to the committee. The incorporation of material in *Hansard* is permitted on the same basis as applies in the house, that is, that it is purely statistical and limited to one page in length.

All questions are to be directed to the minister, not the minister's advisers. The minister may refer questions to advisers for a response. The committee's examination will be broadcast in the same manner as sittings of the house are broadcast, that is, through the IPTV system within Parliament House via the webstream link to the internet and the Parliament of South Australia video-on-demand broadcast system.

I now proceed to open the following lines of examination: the Department for Child Protection. The minister appearing is the Minister for Child Protection. I declare the proposed payments open for examination and refer members to Agency Statements, Volume 1. Minister, could you please introduce your advisers opening statement, if required.

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** Yes, thank you. I would like to introduce, firstly, to my left, Cathy Taylor, the Chief Executive. To my right is Fiona Ward, the Deputy Chief Executive, and Jennifer Browne, the Chief Financial Officer. Behind me we have Gabriella Ramsay, the Chief Human Resource Officer. Next to her is Tom Rich, Parliament and Cabinet Coordinator.

I would like to start by extending my thanks to my department, the Department for Child Protection, and all of its hardworking staff, dedicated to keeping children safe in South Australia. I would also like to thank our invaluable partners in the community who are also working incredibly hard to care for and protect our children and young people: our carers, service providers and volunteers.

Over the last 12 months, there have been a number of highlights in the work of my department and their improved responsiveness to children and young people who require our protection to keep them safe from abuse and neglect. I am very proud to report that for the first time the Department for Child Protection has come in with a balanced budget. A greater proportion of children in out-of-home care are now finally in family-based placements.

Despite the increased volume of calls made to the call centre between 1 July and 31 May this year, 9 per cent more calls were answered when compared with the previous year. The average child abuse report line wait time has reduced to 11 minutes and 2 seconds, down from 15 minutes and 46 seconds at 30 June last year.



In July 2018, the eCARL call-back system was switched on for the first time. At 31 May 2019, 97.5 per cent of those who used the system received a call back within just two hours. My department has also improved the eCARL system, whereby an email reminder is sent after two days, and again after seven days, when a notification is drafted but not finalised and submitted. Seventy per cent of eCARLs submitted are now processed within 24 hours.

The Department for Child Protection's workforce has grown from 1,999.13 FTEs as at 30 June last year to 2,106.94 FTEs as at 31 May 2019. There has been a reduction in vacancies and an increase in the staff retention rates across the department. As the member for Narrunga will appreciate, the Kadina office has now been expanded, and DCP teams have transitioned into its new location. Deployment of mobile technology is underway, providing those employed in direct service delivery with a flexible way of working and with access from the field to information needed to make timely and informed decisions.

The average vacancy rate of social worker and case manager roles has decreased from 13.1 per cent in March 2018 to 9.4 per cent in May 2019, an improvement in the rate of vacancies of 28 per cent. We have continued to reduce the number of screened-in notifications that are closed with no action, and increase the number referred to other agencies for response. We are conducting more investigations, and I am delighted to advise that the sector is now being consulted on the in-care strategy, previously known as out-of-home-care strategy.

We have decommissioned the Queenstown 12-bed residential care facility and established a specialised residential care service for Aboriginal young people that is culturally appropriate and led by an Aboriginal organisation, reinforcing our commitment to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child placement principle. In recent weeks, I joined the chief executive to launch the DCP Aboriginal action plan.

Our election commitments that have been met include our carer payments to age 21, as reported in today's paper. We have also broadened the accepted qualifications, resulting in 32 professional officers being engaged so far. With the wonderful help of our foster care agency partners, my goal of a net 50 increase in foster carers was achieved last financial year, and I expect will continue to be achieved since the launch of the department's foster care website: [www.fostercare.sa.gov.au](http://www.fostercare.sa.gov.au), 'Take the quiz'.

The number and proportion of children in family-based care continues to improve, bringing us closer to the national average. While I am proud of what has been achieved in the 16 months since I became the minister, there are still many improvements to be made. I will continue to work with carers, the non-government sector, my ministerial colleagues and my department to ensure the best outcomes for children and young people who have contact with the child protection system.

**Ms STINSON:** Thank you very much, minister, and thank you to your officials for making themselves available today. To cite a reference: Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 83, highlights. Were there any errors detected in the child protection related budget papers that were tabled to the house on budget day, or have any changes been made?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** What line specifically are you talking about?

**Ms STINSON:** I am talking about the entire child protection related section of the budget. To assist you, I have not detected any, but in my previous arts hearing there were a number of errors.

**The CHAIR:** Member for Badcoe, you do not need—

**Ms STINSON:** I am just trying to assist.

**The CHAIR:** I am the one who assists; that is my role. Your role is to ask questions.

**Ms STINSON:** It is not a trick question.

**The CHAIR:** No, no, and the minister will answer.

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** Thank you for that clarification, but there are none that we are aware of.

**Ms STINSON:** Thank you very much, I appreciate that. Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 83, highlights: how many foster carers entered the system in 2018-19?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** For the year 2018-19, to 31 May there were 134 new foster carers.

**Ms STINSON:** How many exited in that same period?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** There were 104.

**Ms STINSON:** Is that a rate above attrition of 30?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** I will pass that to the Chief Executive Officer, Cathy Taylor.

**Ms TAYLOR:** The numbers provided by the minister in terms of our foster carers are actually foster carers who have had a primary placement with them. So when we refer to the 134 entering and the 104 exiting, those are foster carers who have had a child placed with them as at 31 May.

What I thought you would be really interested to know is that, while we do not have all the details yet of registered primary carers in terms of entries and exits—because that figure will come when the data is fully cleansed, at the end of August—we know that the net gain from registered primary carers from the previous year, which was 2017-18, was 1,246, and that has grown to a total of 1,296 registered primary carers and households, regardless of a child being placed with them. That is a net gain of 50 at this time.

**Ms STINSON:** That is the list of registered carers as opposed to carers who are available to have a child in their home, is it not?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** Cathy.

**Ms TAYLOR:** Again, I thank the member for the question. I am not sure what you mean by available or unavailable. We do not use that as a term. We have carers who are registered and are in a position to have a child placed with them, and then we have carers with whom a child has already been placed.

**Ms STINSON:** So there are some carers who have a child with them, who have been recruited in the last year—

**Ms TAYLOR:** Yes.

**Ms STINSON:** —and have a child with them, and there are some carers who are registered but, for whatever reason, do not have a child with them?

**Ms TAYLOR:** That is correct.

**The CHAIR:** Sorry, Ms Taylor, it is quite specific that all questions are to be asked and answered via the minister, and the dialogue has to be through me as the Chair. Thank you, member for Badcoe.

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** So what is the question?

**Ms STINSON:** The CE did answer the question. I can move on, if you would like.

**The CHAIR:** Are you happy to repeat the question, member for Badcoe?

**Ms STINSON:** I have an answer to the question already. I am happy to move on, thank you.

**The CHAIR:** Indeed.

**Ms STINSON:** Minister, on what basis do you say that you have attracted 50 additional carers over attrition who are actually available to care for children? What are the figures you cite to make that statement?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** For the additional carers, the total went from 1,246 to 1,296. They are households with registered primary carers as at 30 June. My commitment was to have a net increase of 50, which we have. Whether they received the child as at 31 May or whether they have a child in their care in June or in July was irrelevant to the goal of having 50 extra foster carers, which we have achieved.

**Ms STINSON:** Your commitment, actually, from estimates last year was that you would have 50 extra carers above attrition and that that would result in 50 children coming out of residential or commercial care. Has that happened? Are there a subsequent 50 fewer children in residential and commercial care who have been placed with carers?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** There is actually more than 50 extra children who have gone into foster care. I will just find the figure.

**Ms STINSON:** I am talking about above attrition rather than raw numbers because, obviously, we know children come in and out of those forms of care.

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** There were actually 89 more children in foster care over the past 11 months. There were 1,434 children in foster care as at 30 June 2018. As at 31 May, bearing in mind we have one more month to go, we have 1,523, being a total increase of 89 children who are not in any other form of care; they are in foster care.

**Ms STINSON:** Of those 50 additional foster carers that you claim, how many of them have children placed with them?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** I do not have that data here. Of course, we have multiple foster care agencies and the information changes daily.

**Ms STINSON:** So you do not know how many of the 50 extra that are registered this year, above attrition, actually have children that they are caring for?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** I do not have that information. We can make inquiries and bring that back to the house.

**Ms STINSON:** Again, why do you assert that you have achieved this target of 50 additional foster carers who have taken children from residential and commercial care if you do not know how many of them actually have children in their care?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** We have already answered that, but I think that simple maths will tell you that 1,296 minus 1,246 equals 50. There are 50 additional registered primary carers as at 31 May, so in 11 months. It could even increase—hopefully it will—as of 30 June.

**Ms STINSON:** I hope it does. To be clear, what I am getting at is the distinction between the number of foster carers who are registered and the number of foster carers who have a child in their care. I understand that you have said you do not have that data, but if there is anything else that you can say to enlighten me on that distinction I would be grateful.

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** What I will say is that, from my questioning of the Report on Government Services for many years, the Labor government had more than double the national average of children who were not in family-based care, so a lot of work has been put into—

**Ms STINSON:** That is not the question.

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** —getting foster carers to improve our number of children that are in family-based care. As at 30 June 2017, there were 83.1 per cent of children in family-based care. We have managed to increase that to 85.6 per cent as at 31 May 2019. I feel I have answered your questions. We have agreed to take anything else on notice, and I have nothing more to say on this topic.

**Ms STINSON:** I do not recall you taking anything on notice, actually. I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 83. I understand that the minister wishes to reduce the number of children in commercial care, as do we all. Acknowledging that for some children commercial care is in fact the best option, does the minister have any idea of what a reasonable number of children in this form of care is?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** If you can give me the definition of what you consider to be reasonable? What would reasonable be?

**Ms STINSON:** Whatever you define reasonable as. I am happy to hear what your definition of it is.

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** The national average of children in family-based care is 93 per cent, so as a state and as a department that is what we are aiming for. We are aiming to have equivalent to the national average of 93 per cent of children who are in out-of-home-care to be in family-based care, which would leave 7 per cent in non-family-based care.

**Ms STINSON:** What does that translate to in terms of the numbers of children in commercial care right now? The most recent figure that is publicly available was 101 or 102. I know that you stated a different number as the current number on radio yesterday. You might need to help me on that; I think it was 93 or might it have been 96.

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** It was 93 on Monday.

**Ms STINSON:** In light of your earlier answer, what do you think is a reasonable number of children to have in commercial care?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** We are really working on out-of-home-care that is non-family-based as a whole, so residential care and commercial care. It is very easy to move things around. I know that under the Labor government, they moved a hundred very quickly from commercial care into residential care. They had terrible issues with placement breakdowns because they rushed to just get the figure down in commercial care. It has been a problem that we have now had to deal with, coming into government.

Under the Labor government, hurrying to move a child out of commercial care without stabilising their behaviours, settling them in, doing all the medical checks, seeing how they are, getting them settled, and then putting them into a placement that is working really well just because there is a space there led to many poor outcomes for the children who were already stabilised in a home. So, we are not rushing to just simply move children out of commercial care into residential care; we are looking at them as a whole and saying that all of them should be in family-based care wherever possible.

As you acknowledged, some of them are more suited to residential-based care or commercial care because they have multiple complex behaviours that mean that they probably are not suited to a family situation. As you acknowledged, there are some children for whom commercial care or residential care, where you have one-on-one care, is going to be the best outcome. Jenny Browne has been developing care packages now that are specific to the child's needs. In particular, we know that 30 per cent of children in care are eligible for the NDIS, so they do have behaviours or disabilities that make it harder to place them in a family home.

**Ms STINSON:** You would be aware, of course, that there was previously a stated target of 10 children in commercial care. Do you not have a target anymore?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** I think as a total we definitely do want to reduce it. It is very difficult to make an exact target because we are talking about children. As I said—

**Ms STINSON:** That is fine; if you do not have a target, you do not have a target.

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** —many mistakes can be made if you rush to meet a target. We are putting the best interests of the children ahead of targets. We absolutely are aiming to reach the national average of 93 per cent of children in family-based care and we are doing everything possible to attain that goal, but we will not be pushed into meeting a target at the cost of negative outcomes for children.

**Ms STINSON:** I know there was an audit of children in out-of-home care conducted last year, which we spoke about at last estimates. Did that audit determine how many children in commercial care, as opposed to residential care, do not need to be in that form of care?

**Mr ELLIS:** Was that audit in here?

**Ms STINSON:** You can make a point of order if you want, mate. I have already stated a budget line.

**The CHAIR:** Member for Badcoe, no-one here is called 'mate'.

**Ms STINSON:** Well, he is talking to me across the chamber.

**The CHAIR:** That is fine. Do not listen to interjections; it is disorderly.

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** It does not really have a budget line that I can see; however, I am advised that the information is available on our website.

**The CHAIR:** The member for Colton has been waiting very patiently.

**Mr COWDREY:** Thank you, Chair, I appreciate it. My question is also related to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 81, key agency outputs. What has the child protection department done to improve the planning for stability for children in out-of-home care?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** Thank you very much for the question. One of our most significant achievements over the past year relates to children in care having case plans. Case planning is a crucial process in child-centred work. It is a place where a child's needs are recorded centrally along with decisions about contact with family, maintaining connection to culture, plans for reunification and more. The best case plans are designed openly and transparently, involving consultation with the key people involved in the child or young person's life. This can include carers, birth and extended families, educators, therapists and, most importantly, the child or young person.

The Australian Productivity Commission sought data on this in the years 2011 to 2017 under the former government, but this was never provided. The Child Protection Systems Royal Commission also sought this data during its hearings, where it was reported to Commissioner Nyland that reporting on this measure would require six days of data extraction, and the request was not pursued.

As at 30 June 2017, the number of children and young people with case plans was only 28.9 per cent. Curiously, the data was not released at that time, yet it was available. Last year, I supported the decision to release the data to the Australian Productivity Commission for the first time. The 2019 RoGS reported that 53.4 per cent of children and young people had a case plan in South Australia as at 30 June 2018. This result was well below the national average of 83.8 per cent.

At my urging to make this a priority, I am pleased to report that, as at 30 June 2019, 88.9 per cent of children and young people in care have a completed case plan. Importantly, case planning is now embedded within its performance reporting structures and will remain a focus of my department.

**Ms STINSON:** I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 85. It is projected that 193 additional children will come into care this financial year, that is, children under the age of 18. Do you agree that that is an accurate projection?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** I will hand over to the chief financial officer.

**Ms BROWNE:** From the budget modelling perspective, we work very closely with the Department of Treasury and Finance. The number of young people coming into care is not an easy number to predict, both in volume and care type. Care type will depend on the needs of the young people at the time coming into care. The increase that is in the budget papers as an opening budget number is a 5 per cent increase. We will work with Treasury and Finance over the year and revise that number as necessary, based on the needs and the profile of the young people coming into care.

**Ms STINSON:** Through the minister, is that a conservative estimate to look at a 5 per cent increase considering, minister, you said yourself that it has been an average of 8 per cent over previous years?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** I will give that to Jenny as well to explain how that has worked over the years. You will see it has been quite inaccurate for a very long time.

**Ms BROWNE:** The practice of having a conservative estimate in the initial opening budget is a consistent practice that has always been the case for this portfolio. The numbers are revised as necessary because the numbers can be quite different from year to year. There have been some years where there has been no increase and then there are other years where there has been a 9 per cent increase, so a 5 per cent starting point is a reasonable position. We will continue to monitor that number and work with Treasury and Finance on revisions as necessary, as we have done in previous years.

**Ms STINSON:** Through the minister, you described it as an opening budget, so do you expect that that number is likely to change and be reviewed in the Mid-Year Budget Review?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** The chief executive would like to say something.

**Ms TAYLOR:** As our chief financial officer said, this is the first year where we have had the prediction of 5 per cent. Every year prior to that for this portfolio it has been estimated at 3 per cent. I think we talked about this this time last year. There are a number of factors that will impact placement growth. Obviously, that is not just about the numbers of children and young people coming into care, it is also about the rate of reunification from care and the age of population in care.

We are also hoping that things such as family group conferencing, which has been announced as a budget initiative to commence in January of next year, will also impact on the rates. As a result, as the chief financial officer said, we work really closely with our colleagues in Treasury and Finance to provide best estimates of what the rate of growth should look like.

In addition to that, we are also working on some critical outcomes that were outlined by Justice Nyland in her seminal report. Probably the most important one of those is the establishment of the Early Intervention Research Directorate, which is now housed in the Department of Human Services, and their predictions about what is needed.

What I am delighted to say is that we are very hopeful that the new service established in the north will actually direct more than 40 families per annum away from the out-of-home care, so I absolutely can understand the question about: does it look like a fair and accurate record? Yes, based on our experience, this is a very good starting point. We believe it reflects our best advice from a practice, policy, research and outcome for children and young people. As I said, we will continue to revisit that, but I think it is a very good starting point.

**Ms STINSON:** Same budget reference: minister, are you aiming for a lower projection at all? If so, what is that target figure?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** I am happy with the 5 per cent growth that has been included in this year's budget. As I have stated on the record, my goal is to reduce the number of children coming into care and, as I have also said many times, on coming into government we have actually made improvements to the system. We have answered more calls more quickly, we have had more investigations, we have had less 'closed no action' cases, so we are actually clearing a backlog of children who were being left in danger due to a lack of resourcing.

In the beginning, you are going to have potentially more children coming in than you had before because you have a backlog that you are clearing. We also have the time delay of making sure that our programs and our money is invested wisely. Through the Early Intervention Research Directorate, they found that a lot of the programs that had previously been funded were not getting the outcomes that they wanted and they were not evidence based. It is only now that the early intervention, the family support services, are starting in the north.

We have also announced a program that will start in the west, and in this year's budget there has been \$1.6 million allocated to family group conferencing. It is those initiatives that can stem the flow coming in. Of course, the numbers will also be expanded because we have children now over 18 who will be staying in care until 21, so the figures may increase, in fact, overall. However, it is the early intervention and prevention that will affect numbers coming in.

**Ms STINSON:** How confident are you that your budget will be met, considering that you cannot be sure of the numbers of children coming in or whether the estimate of 193 additional children is accurate?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** Do you mean the budget for the number of children or the whole budget, the half a billion?

**Ms STINSON:** Are you confident that you will meet your overall budget this year?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** The financial figure for the total budget of my department?

**Ms STINSON:** Yes.

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** Well, we met it for the first time last year. It is the first time that any of the people working with me have ever seen that happen. I do not believe it ever happened under Labor, so I am quite confident in the financial capabilities of our chief financial officer and the team, and I would be very hopeful that we would meet our budget. Of course, any overruns were due to an increase in children, and you are not going to just not fund a placement for a child.

**Ms STINSON:** To be fair, though, you did not actually meet the budget for last year; you met it once, you revised it in the Mid-Year Budget Review. I am asking if, on these numbers that are in your budget at the moment, you are confident that you will meet your budget?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** I will defer that one to our chief financial officer. She can explain.

**Ms BROWNE:** So, again, as we spoke of earlier, the ability to predict the number of children coming into care and the individual care needs is not an easy number to predict. It changes from year to year. So, depending on the care needs of the young people coming into care, it could influence the financial outcome. The budget that we have at the moment is a reasonable starting position based on historical spend patterns but, again, the unpredictability of kids coming into care is the main driver of any change in performance.

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** I will get Cathy Taylor to add to that. She has something more to say.

**Ms TAYLOR:** Thank you for that. The other thing that I would add—and I think we have outlined this each year as we have come before the house and the committee—is that we now have a much better understanding of what is driving our costs. We understand what is contributing and, quite rightly, as the chief financial officer said, it is driven not just by the numbers but also the care types.

What we have also tried to spend quite a bit of time doing is not just focusing on dollars but on understanding how we respond to the clinical needs of children and young people because we always have to balance that, and quite rightly. As the minister continues to talk to us about, we must put the safety and wellbeing of children as the paramount consideration for us. Yes, we think the budget is a good, fair and equitable budget and we are certainly committed to delivering on same, and we will always focus on the clinical outcomes for children and young people.

As I said, I think the work over the last couple of years was really to understand it. If I just for a moment focus on the work we have done in partnership with the sector, moving from block funding, where we might have only seen utilisation rates in our residential care services of 70 per cent, to more of a fee for service, what we are actually getting is better outcomes and, more importantly, more children are getting better responses and better services. I think it comes back to: how do we provide a fair, just and equitable response to all children and young people in out-of-home care in South Australia?

**Ms STINSON:** Budget Paper 5, page 19, talks about the additional resources or blowout of \$26.9 million. Could you provide a breakdown as to what that is being spent on? Is it all for residential care or are there other forms of care that that money is being spent on?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** Is that the top line, the operating expenses, the 18,478?

**Ms STINSON:** Yes. There is \$18.5 million this year, \$5.9 million next year and \$2.6 million in 2021-22. I am asking if that will all be spent on residential care or is there something else that that money is going to?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** Do you want to ask another question while we look for that answer or are you happy to wait? Cathy Taylor will start the answer while we get some more figures.

**Ms STINSON:** I am happy for you to take it on notice if you do not know the answer.

**Ms TAYLOR:** I am certainly happy to kick it off. Can I just confirm the question?

**Ms STINSON:** You have a figure in there of \$26.9 million, which is called additional resources, and there is an explanatory note that says that this includes residential care and is due to

the blowout in the number of children coming into care. My question is: is that \$26.9 million all to be spent on residential care or does it cover other forms of care or other expenses in the department?

**Ms TAYLOR:** Thank you for repeating the question. I am delighted to advise that it is in fact to respond to more than just residential care. It provides for growth in both family-based care and also a smaller level of growth in non-family-based care. In particular, it also picks up issues such as the full year effect of the election commitment for extending foster care payments to 21. So I think it is the growth of family-based care. I understand the number is 160 and the growth in non-family-based care is 33, so significantly it is about the growth in family-based care, reflecting our commitment to that form of care and wanting to meet the national average of 93 per cent.

**Ms STINSON:** Is there a split, a dollar figure, for how much of that \$26.9 million is going to family-based care and how much is going to non-family-based care? I am happy for you to take that on notice.

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** We will take that one on notice.

**Ms STINSON:** Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 81 has the section on reconciliations to agency, and I know the minister spoke about early intervention and prevention earlier. Why has the area of early intervention and prevention for child protection been moved to the Department of Human Services?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** That was part of a whole-of-government change, machinery of government. From all the briefings that I attended from the Early Intervention Research Directorate as a result of the Nyland royal commission, what they did was research all of the early intervention and prevention programs that were across state government to look at those that were being effective and those that had outcomes. They found that, in fact, alarmingly, the government would have been better off spending nothing and leaving children where they were than spending hundreds of millions of dollars and getting very poor outcomes for children.

So it was determined that all of those programs should be brought together into a specialised unit as part of the human services department. Originally, the former government put that in Premier and Cabinet and then, under the new government, we put that into Human Services as of 1 July this year. There were programs that were in Education, some that were in Health, some that were in the Department for Child Protection. They have all been amalgamated so that we can have a united and across government approach to early intervention and prevention.

**Ms STINSON:** How is that consistent with the government's promise to have one minister who is responsible for child protection?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** Child protection is further on. There is early intervention and prevention and then there is the statutory protection of children, which is after a court order has been made, after the investigation. We are responsible for taking the calls, making the investigations, presenting a case to the courts. The courts determine what type of order the child should be on.

It is very consistent with the Premier's approach that we should have a whole-of-government approach to everything. Every two weeks, we have a Social Affairs Cabinet Committee meeting attended by the Department of Human Services minister, me, the health and wellbeing minister, and anybody from the social services area. We meet to discuss cross government policies that will help the whole of our community. Rather than the silo approach that governments have been known for, the new approach under the Marshall Liberal government is that we must work together for the best outcomes of everyone, and this was determined.

I certainly have a lot of say regarding all of the programs that go through the Department of Human Services relating to children or early intervention. We discuss that as a group. We are a cabinet-run government, so we make decisions in the best interests of the entire state.

**Ms STINSON:** Do you see early intervention and prevention as a key part of child protection and, indeed, a lever of child protection?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** I might defer to the chief executive who is the chair of the committee that looks into all of the early intervention and prevention.



**Ms TAYLOR:** I thank the member for the question. It is absolutely the case that early intervention will have a number of critical levers to influence both the incidence of abuse and neglect and also the need for out-of-home care. It is one of the reasons that we work so closely together. If I liken it to the health system—and I think this is one that is probably well understood by a lot of people—at the same time that we are looking at receiving calls and undertaking investigations, it is very similar to the way in which people access the health system, often through an accident and emergency department.

The role that public health plays, and in our case early intervention plays, is actually about what actions, supports, processes can play out that will actually reduce the demand for statutory intervention, for having to remove a child from their family. In the same way that we know that we want to reduce the incidence of heart disease and we pay attention to blood pressure and all of that, it is the same way in which we want to actually work with those who are more likely to come to our attention. This is the critical role that early intervention plays.

I think the other thing is it has been really important for us to partner with both the Australian Centre for Child Protection and the University of Adelaide and the work led by Professor John Lynch and Dr Rhiannon Pilkington. Initially, at the time of the Nyland report, the view was that something like one in four children were coming to the attention of the Department for Child Protection. We now believe something like one in three children are being notified to the department. I guess the really important question that we need to focus upon is, in the short term, we cannot leave children unsafe, but if we invest in those early intervention programs, the right programs, it is absolutely one of the most powerful levers to actually ensure that families are not coming to the attention of the Department for Child Protection.

**Ms STINSON:** Minister, do you take the view that it is a whole-of-government responsibility and all ministers are responsible for child protection, or do you take the view that the buck stops with you, and you are the minister who looks after all aspects and all responsibility for child protection?

**Mr COWDREY:** Is there a budget reference to that question?

**Ms STINSON:** There certainly is. It is Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 81, reconciliation to agency, which goes to the question of early intervention and prevention being moved from one agency to the other.

*Mr Brown interjecting:*

**The CHAIR:** Order, Member for Playford!

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** I think there is a dual answer to that. I am the Minister for Child Protection. I absolutely take responsibility for the department and all of the decisions that are made. However, we are part of our clearly cabinet-run government. The Premier, Steven Marshall, has made that very clear. There are to be no silos. We work across government. We work collaboratively. We share information where it is in the best interests of the child to get good outcomes.

Whilst I have a very keen interest in prevention and early intervention, as I do regarding the three major reasons that children are removed, which are domestic violence, mental health and drug and alcohol abuse, they are not my responsibilities, but they are incredibly important to fixing the entire system. They require a whole-of-government approach. So it is both.

**Ms STINSON:** Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 10: can you provide a breakdown of the 115 FTE roles to be axed in 2019-20? I am aware there have been public statements that that includes the 59 financial counsellors and 31 redundancies from the April round, but I wondered if you could fill us in on what the remaining positions are?

**Mr ELLIS:** What page?

**Ms STINSON:** I did give a budget paper reference.

**The CHAIR:** No, it is for my benefit.

**Ms STINSON:** It is Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 80, which is the workforce summary.

**The CHAIR:** I do not believe you said that the first time, member for Badcoe.

**Ms STINSON:** I did, sir, but I am happy to pay special attention to it.

**The CHAIR:** I do not believe you did. That is fine. I was just asking for my own benefit.

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** Overall, there are 115.5 Department for Child Protection FTEs affected in the 2019-budget. This FTE reduction will be managed through natural attrition and targeted voluntary separation packages. This includes a cessation of the 59 FTEs for financial wellbeing counsellors that was announced through the previous budget. In the 2018-19 year, an additional 27 TVSPs were accepted by financial counsellors, and 34 non-front-line staff also accepted TVSPs, being a total of 61.

As part of the delivery of the Nyland recommendations, DCP was given a number of time-limited FTE positions. Of these, a small number of project roles did not continue past 30 June 2019. Our child protection investigations and guardianship case management capacity will not be impacted by these changes.

Following the 2018-19 budget, DCP announced the discontinuation of the financial wellbeing program as at 30 June 2019, and that DCP clients in need of financial counselling would be referred to the Department of Human Services statewide financial counselling program or programs offered by NGOs. The new approach is expected to be more effective and efficient, and the 59 relevant staff have either received TVSPs, being 27, transitioned to other roles within the Department for Child Protection, being 30, or transferred to other departments, being two.

It is worth noting that, since the creation of DCP as a standalone department in 2016, more than 400 FTEs have been recruited. The initial departmental focus was on governance as required to establish and position a new department. However, the focus in 2018-19 was on efficiency and direct child-focused service delivery. The mechanisms to meet the efficiency measures are entirely consistent with the core function of my department.

The approach I have just outlined in no way impacts on the direct service delivery of services, ensuring my department continues to provide statutory child protection services. The focus of my department is and will remain on the safety of at-risk children and young people and the care and protection of those who need to enter the out-of-home-care system.

**Ms STINSON:** Of the roles that were appointed in response to the Nyland royal commission, which expired on 30 June this year, how many were converted from—

**The CHAIR:** Member for Badcoe, can you refer me to a budget line item?

**Ms STINSON:** The same one, sir.

**The CHAIR:** Which is?

**Ms STINSON:** Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 80, workforce summary. It is also a question following on from the minister's answer. I will start again. Of the positions that finished on 30 June 2019, which were initially hired in response to the Nyland royal commission, how many of those roles have been converted from contract to permanent ongoing roles, how many were given short-term contract extensions and how many were not reappointed? Basically, what happened to those Nyland positions that finished on 30 June? Again, I am happy for you to take it on notice.

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** Jenny, our financial officer, has the breakdown available.

**Ms BROWNE:** There were 39 positions made permanent ongoing.

**Ms STINSON:** I also asked how many were given short-term contract extensions. I understand a number were given 12-month contracts.

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** We will take that on notice.

**Ms STINSON:** If you are taking it on notice—it is not a new question—I would just like to clarify that the other aspect of the original question was how many were not reappointed. I am happy for you to take that on notice as well, thank you.

**Mr ELLIS:** My question relates to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 83, under highlights, the second dot point from the bottom. How is the department better supporting children in care with disabilities?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** I thank the member for his question. My department is leading the national work for children in care with disabilities, and is represented by the deputy chief executive officer, who chairs the national working group focusing on the interface between child protection and disability. In July 2018 my department strengthened its capacity to best respond to the needs of children and young people in care when we recruited a specialist team to staff a DCP disability program, increasing it from the then two disability-specific positions to 11.3 FTEs.

Since the commencement of the disability program, staff across the department have been able to readily access expert advice and assistance from the disability specialists, and that is regarding how to access the National Disability Insurance Scheme for those children and young people with a disability in care, how to ensure that existing NDIS plans are current, appropriate and meet the specific needs of the child, and how to identify and engage with registered NDIS service providers.

The program is also able to provide advice on the roles and responsibilities of both the department and the NDIS to ensure that together the two agencies work in a way that effectively meets the needs of the child or young person. There were a total of 635 children and young people in care with an improved NDIS plan as at 30 June 2019.

A further group are currently undergoing the NDIS planning process. The ability of my department to effectively navigate and engage with the NDIS system provides direct results for those children on a plan who benefit from being able to access funded supports and services. Crucially, many children and young people in care with disabilities are in family-based care and, while my department retains responsibility for the oversight of the NDIS plans, we work in partnership with the carers, acknowledging that often they are best placed to provide information about the child's specific needs.

Through the NDIS, the costs of specialised disability support needs for children and young people in care in South Australia are appropriately being met by the National Disability Insurance Agency. Without such effective engagement and advocacy by my department, the needs of children and young people in care with a disability would not have been effectively addressed. The Children and Young People (Safety) Act does not allow for a statutory child protection response solely on the basis of a disability or lack of disability supports; however, when a child protection notification is received and an assessment shows no risk of harm, but of need for access or increased access to disability supports, my department is also able to escalate those cases with the NDIS.

In particular, last financial year there were 11 children and young people who, without the support of my department and the assistance of the relationship between my department and the NDIA, could have potentially entered the out-of-home care system. Their families, without further disability supports, would not have been able to appropriately care for them.

In addition to accessing supports and services, staff from the disability program have been involved in improving and the commissioning of out-of-home care services, and are able to effectively respond to the needs of children and young people in care with a disability. This has resulted in being able to support increased stability for children in care with a disability through specialist, multidisciplinary assessment and intervention.

**Ms STINSON:** I can give you a budget paper reference or it is a supplementary to the one that was just asked: Budget Paper 4—

**The CHAIR:** Supplementary questions are at my discretion—

**Ms STINSON:** Fair enough. I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 83, the sixth bullet point about the NDIS. How many children have been identified as potentially eligible for an NDIS plan but do not have a plan yet?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** As mentioned in my previous answer, there are 635 children currently with a plan. Any other children who have been identified as needing a plan are currently undergoing the planning process.

With children coming into care, obviously there are more children who come into care, so that will be assessed in a timely manner. Also, needs change as children hit different ages or things can trigger different needs. That is also why we do a yearly assessment on the financial needs of children because the needs that they have in one year can change. As they grow older it could become less or it could become more complex.

**Ms STINSON:** Is the department aware of any children who are potentially eligible for an NDIS plan who do not currently have an NDIS plan?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** As I said, some are in the planning process so, yes, there would be some who do not.

**Ms STINSON:** How many are in the planning process is what I am asking, or how many are yet to enter the planning process?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** We do not have the numbers because that changes daily. I will pass that over to our deputy CE.

**Ms WARD:** I am constantly seeing children coming in and out of care daily. So there will be children that will—

**Ms STINSON:** Sorry, I am just struggling to hear you. It is probably because the mic only just went on.

**Ms WARD:** Sorry. The number changes daily in terms of the planning process because there are children who are reunified. So they might be on our books one day but they are not on another day. I could not give you an accurate number because it changes daily, but we could give you a rough number at a point in time on notice, but I could not give you that today.

**Ms STINSON:** Yes, that is fine. I am happy for it to be taken on notice and, if we want to pick 30 June 2019, that would be good.

**Ms WARD:** Yes, absolutely, but what I would just say—

**The CHAIR:** All answers through the minister—

**Ms STINSON:** Sorry, through the minister.

**The CHAIR:** —and questions through the minister.

**Ms WARD:** Sorry. If I could respond.

**The CHAIR:** Yes.

**Ms WARD:** What I would say, though, is that we do, as the minister has mentioned, have disability specialists work in all of our regions who are constantly working with case managers to identify children who might benefit or be eligible from a disability planning process and a disability plan.

**Ms STINSON:** Just to formalise that through you, minister, could you take on notice the number of children who are potentially eligible for an NDIS plan but do not have one as of 30 June 2019?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** Yes, we will take that on notice.

**Ms STINSON:** Can the department say how many carers are able to negotiate the NDIS plans directly with the NDIS?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** I will pass that over to our chief executive officer.

**Ms TAYLOR:** Thank you very much for the question. That is actually quite a good question in that it really depends upon the nature of the guardianship. Where there are carers who are now the long-term guardian, obviously they, quite properly, would be able to negotiate with the NDIS.

Where I am the guardian, obviously we will be working hand in glove with our carers and the foster care agencies, if they are supported by such an agency, with the NDIS. One of the benefits of our involvement alongside of carers is that we now have an escalation process that has been developed that enables us to deal with matters in a much more timely way than has been the case previously.

**Ms STINSON:** Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 80, workforce summary: was the efficiency measure last year of axing two FTEs achieved and, if so, what were those two positions?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** Cathy Taylor will answer the question.

**Ms TAYLOR:** Thank you very much for the question. They were two executive positions that were ended during that period.

**Ms STINSON:** Could you tell me what part of the department they were in?

**Ms TAYLOR:** Certainly. They were the director of legislation and reform, which was a time-limited executive position, and the director of statewide services.

**Ms STINSON:** What is the current overall staffing shortfall in DCP? How many vacancies are there?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** The chief executive will answer that question.

**Ms TAYLOR:** Obviously, in terms of going forward, the one that I particularly want to focus on in terms of vacancies at this point in time is: what is happening for our social workers and our case management positions? The last time that we ran data we had approximately 45 vacancies. Now, they were not all substantive vacancies. Of those, approximately 25 were substantive vacancies.

I am happy to break that down further because, like you, I want to know what is happening. Of those 25 substantive vacancies, 16 were approximately located in the country. Probably for anyone who comes from the country you will understand that this has been an ongoing challenge for the Department for Child Protection, which is one of the reasons why we were really supportive of expanding qualifications. Of those 16, interestingly, quite a number were for our Port Augusta office.

Once you take out the 25 that are substantive vacancies, the other 20 were timing vacancies. It may be that someone had gone on maternity leave and we were not paying for them at that time. We keep a very close eye on what is happening in our vacancies, particularly for our social workers and case managers, because that is really who we are: we are first and foremost a service delivery agency.

We also then spend time looking at what is happening in terms of our operational staff across residential care and our administrative staff, because they all play a critical role. The last data that we would have seen saw us constantly revisiting what are substantive vacancies and what are time-limited or timing vacancies. As I said, the ones that are really our largest contributors would be what it takes to recruit social workers and case managers to country areas in South Australia.

**Ms STINSON:** Thank you. I realise you might need to take this on notice, but is it possible to get a breakdown of the role titles for the vacant positions? I understand that would be a point-in-time matter, so I am happy to nominate 30 June 2019, if that data could be provided.

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** We will take that on notice and get back to you.

**Ms STINSON:** Just to assist, hopefully, what I am after is an idea of the types of roles and the seniority of those roles that are vacant. I do not know how you put together your figures, but if that could be reflected, that is the kind of information I am after.

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** We can do it by classification.

**Ms STINSON:** Thank you very much. Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 82, investments: is the minister still looking at constructing a new secure therapeutic care facility?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** Just to correct the member, the budget line there states 'residential care facilities'; the term 'secure' is not listed at all. This budget line actually refers to Davoren Park. On coming into government, there are four titles that the Department for Child

Protection owns. The intent of the previous government was to build four properties in a row of three bedrooms, basically equating to a 12-bed facility.

We know that, for many years, the Guardian for Children and Young People and all of the research showed that that is not a suitable type of housing for young people, so I indicated that that was not appropriate and I was not happy for that to proceed. We are now looking at just building one home; in fact, it is being designed currently and we are hoping to design an amazing type of facility for children that will be therapeutic and to the best standards of architecture. I might get Cathy Taylor to expand, because it is quite exciting what we are doing with that.

**Ms TAYLOR:** One of the things that we have taken the opportunity to do in the design of Davoren Park is obviously work with what is going to meet children's needs as well as staff needs. We have actually recently engaged an architect who has expertise, having worked previously with a number of different agencies, that will actually ensure this is the most appropriate environment.

One of our challenges when children are housed in residential care is: how do we provide both a home-like environment and a safe environment? Recently, we undertook consultations with young people. As you can imagine, they all loved the design of it. Probably the only thing on their wish list that we had not accommodated for was access to bathrooms for all of them, but we are going to revisit how we make that work in a way that both meets their needs but also is a fair, just and reasonable expenditure of government funds.

The other thing that we are taking into account in the design is not just the physical design of the house but also the surroundings. What would it be that actually keeps young people engaged after hours and on weekends and how do we really start to reflect a much more home-like environment? We think this is exciting; it is some of the first design-led thinking we have done around new builds that do not have the old feel of the large units.

**Ms STINSON:** In last year's budget that project was due for completion in June 2019. The current budget papers say it is now June 2020. What is the reason for the blowout in the delivery date?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** Because of the change of design and purpose this is a completely different idea that we are working on: the one home as opposed to what would have been a 12-bed facility.

**Mr McBRIDE:** My question involves Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 81, program net cost of services summary. My question is: on 18 June you advised the house that the pool of money had been doubled for exceptional needs funding already and that we would have to wait for the budget to be handed down that afternoon for any further news. What came out of the budget?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** Thank you for your question. As at 31 May 2019, my department had over 3,300 children placed in family-based care. My department has responsibility to ensure the fair and accountable expenditure of public moneys generally but, where Exceptional Resource Funding is concerned, my department is determined to be particularly fair and just to all.

Exceptional circumstances arise where carers may require an additional financial support to meet the particular care needs of an individual child or young person. When this occurs, and in the absence of alternative avenues of support, my department will always consider whether additional funding support can be delivered via the Exceptional Resource Funding procedures.

Let me clarify: since the Liberal government was elected there have been no cuts to Exceptional Resource Funding in my department. This has not been the subject of any savings measures. Since forming government, the Exceptional Resource Funding has more than doubled. In this budget alone there is a further increase of \$600,000 for the coming financial year, bringing it to a total of \$2.6 million for this year, as opposed to the \$1 million that it was under the previous government.

All decisions made to allocate Exceptional Resource Funding take into account and balance the following: (1) the needs of the individual children and carers, (2) the needs of all children and carers, and (3) the need for the public to have confidence that government spending is transparent and equitable. Late last year the policy was reviewed. This week, the new guidelines were released to all department staff.

The new approach maintains the current funding limit of \$20,000 per request, will not exclude any particular type of expenditure and will focus decision-making on the individual circumstances of the child or the young person. I am advised that the vast majority of requests for exceptional funds received from carers are well under the \$20,000 limit and will continue to be considered on a case-by-case basis. As the Minister for Child Protection, I am committed to maintaining strong relationships with those who open their hearts and homes to our most vulnerable children and young people.

**Ms STINSON:** Supplementary.

**The CHAIR:** No. Perhaps a new question.

**Ms STINSON:** Sure. I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 83, Program 1: Care and Protection. Following on from what you were just saying, how many requests are currently pending for exceptional circumstances funding?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** Cathy Taylor will take that question.

**Ms TAYLOR:** Thank you very much for the question. As you would appreciate, with the policy and the delegations, a lot of those decisions are actually being made as close to the child and the business as possible, so I could not provide you with an answer without getting my staff to spend a lot of time reporting up on a daily basis about which ones they are considering or not considering. So at this point in time I would not be able to provide you with that answer.

**Ms STINSON:** Would you be able to take it on notice? I am happy to nominate a date; I realise that the number fluctuates.

**The CHAIR:** I think you mean would the minister be able to.

**Ms STINSON:** I mean through the minister.

**The CHAIR:** Ms Taylor, please.

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** I will direct that to Cathy Taylor again.

**Ms TAYLOR:** What we are talking about is a manual count and a very intensive exercise asking our staff to direct their energies away from investigating and responding to children and young people to answer a question about how many requests they have either received, are receiving, or are processing. I would certainly recommend against our directing our staff to answering that question.

**Ms STINSON:** Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 85: what is the current number of children in state care? I realise that the May DCP statistics have been released and I have those. Is there a more current number of the total number of children in state care?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** I will ask Fiona Ward to answer that question.

**Ms WARD:** The May data online is data that we are confident about as a point-in-time data. I do not have the end of June point-in-time data at this point in time. As you know, the data is cleansed and refreshed, particularly before August at the end of the financial year, so the most accurate information we will have will not probably be until about September. That is not to say we do not have a point-in-time data; it is just that it continues to be improved upon.

**Ms STINSON:** Through the minister, the budget papers have an estimate of 3,862. Can that number be relied upon or not? That was a 30 June figure.

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** For this year?

**Ms STINSON:** For this year.

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** That is an average figure for the entire year rather than a point-in-time figure.

**Ms STINSON:** Thank you very much. Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 83: what is your target for long-term guardianship placements this year and over the coming three years?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** We will get some information; however, I do not have a specific target; I am just focusing on the best interests of the child and what is the best outcome for that child. For children in family-based care, in many situations, long-term guardianship is something that they aspire to, and we have had many people who are very keen to enter that process. But it is not for everyone so I have not set a target, so to speak, but I will pass over to Cathy Taylor to expand on my answer.

**Ms TAYLOR:** I thank the member for the question. The decision to apply for a long-term guardianship order is obviously made in consultation with the carer, and also the child or young person, but it is actually, ultimately a decision for the courts. As the minister said, for us the really big issue is: what is in the best interests of children? What I can confirm is that there were 18 orders granted in 2016-17, there were 45 orders granted in 2017-18, and there were 46 orders granted involving 46 children in 2018-19.

There are also a number that are already going through the processes in terms of preparing for court because we do believe that achieving permanency and stability for children and young people is important. But rather than setting a goal, we are looking at the national averages in terms of how we are comparing and contrasting. At the moment, we are at the lower end in terms of those for whom we are pursuing long-term guardianship applications. So, rather than setting a target of an individual number, what I would like to see us do is continue to work toward the national average, noting, however, that it will depend upon individual circumstances.

The other thing that I should mention is new provisions were made in the legislation that commenced on 22 October last year. I think it is really important that we emphasise that the courts are continuing to grant guardianship orders to other persons, and we continue to support that because we know that for a lot of children and young people they see their carers as mum and dad, and they see that as their forever home.

**Ms STINSON:** Thank you. Through the minister, do you expect the number to increase this year and over the next three years?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** We would like it to increase; however, as I said, it is up to the individual circumstance. I believe that it is in the best interests of most children to have a forever family. That is what they are looking for, and that is why I am always constantly saying, 'Ring 1300TOFOSTER.' We are looking for families for these children. It is very sad having any child in residential care who could be with a family. Not all of them are suitable to go to a family, but for those who are, which we know from the initial audit, around 47 per cent of the children in residential care were only there because of a lack of placements in family-based care.

**Ms STINSON:** I realise you might have to take this on notice but can you tell me how many applications are pending for long-term guardianship?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** Yes, we can actually. As at 30 June 2019, there were three children or two households that were at court, and 37 children representing 18 households that were preparing for court, and a further 15 household assessments totalling 18 children who were being assessed.

**Ms STINSON:** Thank you very much. I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 83, activity indicators. Have you addressed the backlog of outstanding investigations? How far through the task are you and when do you expect to have that completed or under control?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** Sorry, was that page 83?

**Ms STINSON:** Yes, Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 83, activity indicators. There is an activity indicator there for investigations.

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** I can see highlights, targets, program description, expenses—unless I am on the wrong page.

**Ms STINSON:** I am sorry about that, it is page 84, under performance indicators.

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** The third point, children in out-of-home care?



**Ms STINSON:** There are several there to do with investigations. My question is about the backlog of outstanding investigations, how far through that task you are and when you expect to have it completed or under control.

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** I am not sure what you mean by backlog of outstanding investigations because they are at a point in time. As you can see on here, 80.5 per cent of investigations have been commenced within seven days. Are you asking for the balance of that?

**Ms STINSON:** I am actually just trying to find the transcript from yesterday. Maybe the minister has a better recollection than me. You were on FIVEaa yesterday and you were talking about how you were working through the backlog of investigations and that you were making some progress on that.

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** That is not really a budget line, however—

**Ms STINSON:** I am just giving you the context of why I asked the question, and that budget line refers to investigations.

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** It is not really in the budget anywhere that I could find, but what I was referring to was that, for example, in the case of Chloe Valentine there were many notifications, not many investigations. I do not know if there were any actually, from memory. There were notifications that continually were closed with no action, and on the file was written 'due to a lack of resources'. Under the Labor government that occurred in the Hillier instance, in the Chloe Valentine case, in the baby Ebony death, in the Jarrad Delroy Roberts death. That was a consistent theme of the former government.

What I was saying yesterday was that we are answering more calls, more often, doing more investigations and reducing the numbers of 'closed, no actions'. We are finding the Chloe Valentines that were in the system under Labor and we are investigating them and hopefully either putting the supports in or removing a child rather than leaving them there. So it will not affect a budget line that I could point to.

**Ms STINSON:** I certainly have more questions but I understand my colleague wants to ask a few, so thank you very much.

**Mr BROWN:** The omnibus questions are:

1. For each department and agency reporting to the minister:
  - What is the actual FTE count at 30 June 2019 and the projected actual FTE count for each year of the forward estimates?
  - What is the total employment cost for each year of the forward estimates?
  - What is the notional FTE job reduction target that has been agreed with Treasury for each year of the forward estimates?
  - Does the agency or department expect to meet the target in each year of the forward estimates?
  - How many TVSPs are estimated to be required to meet FTE reductions over the forward estimates?
2. Between 1 July 2018 and 30 June 2019, will the minister list the job title and total employment cost of each position with a total estimated cost of \$100,000 or more which has either (1) been abolished and (2) which has been created.
3. Will the minister provide a detailed breakdown of expenditure on consultants and contractors above \$10,000 between 1 July 2018 and 30 June 2019 for all departments and agencies reporting to the minister, listing:
  - the name of the consultant, contractor or service supplier;
  - cost;
  - work undertaken;

- reason for engaging the contractor, and
  - method of appointment?
4. For each department and agency for which the minister has responsibility:
- How many FTEs were employed to provide communication and promotion activities in 2018-19 and what was their employment expense?
  - How many FTEs are budgeted to provide communication and promotion activities in 2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23 and what is their estimated employment expense?
  - The total cost of government-paid advertising, including campaigns, across all mediums in 2018-19 and budgeted cost for 2019-20.
5. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, please provide a full itemised breakdown of attraction and retention allowances as well as non-salary benefits paid to public servants and contracts between 1 July 2018 and 30 June 2019.
6. What is the title and total employment cost of each individual staff member in the minister's office as at 30 June 2019, including all departmental employees seconded to ministerial offices?
7. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, could you detail:
- (a) How much was spent on targeted voluntary separation packages in 2018-19?
  - (b) What department funded these TVSPs? (except for DTF Estimates)
  - (c) What number of TVSPs were funded?
  - (d) What is the budget for targeted voluntary separation packages for financial years included in the forward estimates (by year), and how are these packages funded?
  - (e) What is the breakdown per agency/branch of targeted voluntary separation packages for financial years included in the forward estimates (by year) by FTEs?
8. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, how many executive terminations have occurred since 1 July 2018 and what is the value of executive termination payments made?
9. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, what new executive appointments have been made since 1 July 2018, and what is the annual salary, and total employment cost for each position?
10. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, how many employees have been declared excess, how long has each employee been declared excess, and what is the salary of each excess employee?
11. In the 2018-19 financial year, for all departments and agencies reporting to the minister, what underspending on operating programs (1) was and (2) was not approved by cabinet for carryover expenditure in 2019-20?
12. In the 2018-19 financial year, for all departments and agencies reporting to the minister, what underspending on investing or capital projects or programs (1) was and (2) was not approved by cabinet for carryover expenditure in 2019-20? How was much sought and how much was approved?
13. For each grant program or fund the minister is responsible for please provide the following information for 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-22 financial years:
- (a) Name of the program or fund;
  - (b) The purpose of the program or fund;
  - (c) Balance of the grant program or fund;

- (d) Budgeted (or actual) expenditure from the program or fund;
- (e) Budgeted (or actual) payments into the program or fund;
- (f) Carryovers into or from the program or fund; and
- (g) Details, including the value and beneficiary, of any commitments already made to be funded from the program or fund.

14. For the period of 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019, provide a breakdown of all grants paid by the department/agency that report to the minister, including when the payment was made to the recipient, and when the grant agreement was signed by both parties.

15. For each year of the forward estimates, please provide the name and budgeted expenditure across the 2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23 financial years for each individual investing expenditure project administered by or on behalf of all departments and agencies reporting to the minister.

16. For each year of the forward estimates, please provide the name and budget for each individual program administered by or on behalf of all departments and agencies reporting to the minister.

17. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, what is the total cost of machinery of government changes since 1 July 2018 and please provide a breakdown of those costs?

18. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, what new sections of your department or agency have been established since 1 July 2018 and what is their purpose?

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

- What savings targets have been set for each year of the forward estimates?
- What measures are you implementing to meet your savings target?
- What is the estimated FTE impact of these measures?

**The CHAIR:** Member for Badcoe, do you have a final question?

**Ms STINSON:** I do have a final question. Thank you, sir.

**The CHAIR:** Time allows.

**Ms STINSON:** Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 83, out-of-home care: when will the out-of-home care strategy be released, and what is holding it up?

**The Hon. R. SANDERSON:** I will hand over to the chief executive.

**Ms TAYLOR:** I am delighted to say that we have actually already commenced consultation only last Friday. For example, we went and consulted with CAFFSA, our peak sector partner, around the strategy. We have also renamed it, based on some really good advice about the use of the language of 'out-of-home care'. While it means something to us, most children and young people said to us, 'We're in a home,' so we are calling it the In Home strategy.

In addition to the consultation that happened with CAFFSA last Friday, we have a plan to actually consult with a number of agencies again that we have already consulted with previously. I would like to think that we would be in a position to provide the final version of the strategy in the coming weeks and months but, really importantly, this has been an ongoing process. A number of parties have seen it.

We have tried to refine a couple of areas, but I think people will say it rings true for the areas of focus—the focus on family-based care, the focus on 'How do we grow that?' and 'How do we prioritise that for our children and young people?' and 'How do we ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are responded to?' I think I am getting the nod from the Chair to say time is up.

**The CHAIR:** Yes, we are well and truly over time.

**Ms STINSON:** Thank you very much; I appreciate it.

**The CHAIR:** There being no further questions, I declare the examination of proposed payments for the portfolio Department for Child Protection and the estimate of payments for the Department for Child Protection completed.

At 16:01 the committee adjourned to Friday 26 July 2019 at 09:00.