



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

STANDING COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL POLICY

(Reference: [Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2023-24](#))

Members:

**MR T EMERSON (Chair)
MS C BARRY (Deputy Chair)
MR J HANSON
MISS L NUTTALL
MS C TOUGH**

TRANSCRIPT OF EVIDENCE

CANBERRA

MONDAY, 17 FEBRUARY 2025

**Secretary to the committee:
Ms K Langham (Ph: 620 75498)**

By authority of the Legislative Assembly for the Australian Capital Territory

Submissions, answers to questions on notice and other documents, including requests for clarification of the transcript of evidence, relevant to this inquiry that have been authorised for publication by the committee may be obtained from the Legislative Assembly website.

APPEARANCES

Education Directorate	183
Infrastructure Canberra	183

Privilege statement

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Amended 20 May 2013

The committee met at 10.00 am.

Appearances:

Berry, Ms Yvette, Deputy Chief Minister, Minister for Education and Early Childhood, Minister for Homes and New Suburbs and Minister for Sport and Recreation

Education Directorate

Wood, Ms Jo, Director-General

Spence, Ms Angela, Deputy Director-General

Moore, Dr Nicole, Executive Group Manager, Strategic Policy and Reform

Moysey, Mr Sean, Executive Branch Manager, Education and Care Regulation and Support

Matthews, Mr David, Executive Group Manager, People, Governance and Communications, and Chief Operating Officer

Attridge, Ms Vanessa, Executive Group Manager, Finance and Infrastructure

Huxley, Mr Mark, Executive Group Manager, School Improvement and Performance Division

Infrastructure Canberra

Geraghty, Ms Gillian, Director-General

THE CHAIR: Good morning, and welcome to the public hearing of the Standing Committee on Social Policy for its inquiry into annual and financial reports 2023-24. The committee will this morning hear from the Minister for Education and Early Childhood.

The committee wishes to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands we are meeting on, the Ngunnawal people. We wish to acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of the city and this region. I would also like to acknowledge and welcome other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who may be attending today's hearing.

The proceedings today are being recorded and transcribed by Hansard and will be published. The proceedings are also being broadcast and webstreamed live. When taking a question on notice, it would be useful if witnesses used the words, "I will take that question on notice," which will help the committee and witnesses to confirm questions taken on notice from the transcript.

We welcome Ms Yvette Berry MLA, the Minister for Education and Early Childhood, and officials. I remind witnesses of the protections and obligations afforded by parliamentary privilege and draw your attention to the privilege statement. Witnesses must tell the truth. Giving false or misleading evidence will be treated as a serious matter and may be considered contempt of the Assembly. When you first speak, please confirm that you understand the implications of the privilege statement and agree to comply with it.

We are not inviting opening statements, so we will now proceed to questions. As noted in the report, in 2023-24, Muliyan had capacity for 30 students at any one time and supported 46 students over that time. I understand that the school's capacity has since

reduced to 15 students due to a pause in referrals. Why has capacity reduced from 30 to 15, given the consistent demand?

Ms Wood: I have read and acknowledge the privilege statement. Mr Emerson, there is work happening, looking at flexible ed into the future, and the Muliyan offering in particular. There have been some adjustments made for this year, which Ms Spence can speak to in more detail, which are looking at how we meet the needs. We recognise the increasing demand for that form of education, but we are looking at doing that in different ways—not only onsite, in a particular site, but looking at how we can reach more young people and maybe engage some young people better through outreach options in the community. I will ask Ms Spence to step you through that.

Ms Spence: I acknowledge and understand the privilege statement. Flexible education, as Jo explained, is by that in nature. In order to best meet the needs of our young people in the ACT, a decision was made to offer an extended outreach program for a group of young people who are unable to access Muliyan onsite in a safe way. Often, these young people are in and out of care and in and out of youth justice, and therefore a more targeted approach to meeting their individual needs has been designed.

Flexible education is still offering a service for up to 30 students, with a large proportion of those young people accessing an outreach program designed to best meet their needs. This outreach program means that our workers go to meet a young person on another site and have smaller group, targeted sessions for these young people based on their individual needs. As they implement that outreach model, depending on how the young person progresses, they may be reintroduced back into the Muliyan setting or supported to go back into mainstream education.

Based on our current numbers for 2025, 15 young people will be accessing Muliyan onsite in Woden and up to 15 students will be supported through an outreach program, through accessing supports on alternative sites.

THE CHAIR: Where are these alternative sites? Is this going out to kids where they are? Can you provide some detail on that?

Ms Spence: They are quite flexible in nature. Currently, some of our young people in the northern area access through MacKillop, offering a room available out in Belconnen. We are exploring the option of using an available site at our Namadgi School campus. It is based on access for the young person and being able to provide a space in which they feel safe and comfortable, and based on where they are actually located, in terms of their housing. It is fairly adaptive and flexible.

Of course, any of these sites will need to go through our WHS assessments to make sure that they are suitable places for learning, but they are designed to be flexible in nature, based on the needs of the young person.

THE CHAIR: Are you able to provide a number for how many young people were referred to Muliyan—I am not sure when the flexible education program changed to this kind of split model—in 2023-24, but missed out due to the program being at capacity? Would you have a general sense?

Ms Spence: We are oversubscribed in terms of our numbers. I do not have specific numbers available at this point. Generally, we receive more applications than we can take. There is a process whereby a panel looks at all of those applications. It is based on a set of established criteria to prioritise those young people in terms of their needs and the access to that service.

Those people that do not get offered a place are still supported through their mainstream school settings and are provided support through flex ed, as needed, in terms of how to engage those young people in a mainstream environment in their local schools. From time to time we have young people that return back to their local school. As places become available, we take young people off the waiting list so that they can start their engagement with that Muliyan flexible education service.

THE CHAIR: Are you able to provide, on notice, a number for the current level of oversubscription, and how many young people were referred in 2023-24 but did not—

Ms Spence: I can take that question on notice and provide the last intake round numbers for you.

THE CHAIR: That is a reduction in capacity onsite, but there is the same capacity, despite potentially increasing demand. We will see what the question on notice indicates. Was consideration given to maintaining the capacity that we have onsite in Muliyan and increasing the scope of the program, especially given that we might see an increase in referrals as a result of raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility? Is work being done on increasing our capacity to support kids who need it?

Ms Berry: I have read and acknowledge the privilege statement. Muliyan was a flexible education model which I introduced, noting the need for young people in the ACT to have a different kind of education that was not the same as attending a class. Since we developed it, obviously, through the first few years of its development, we were working through how it would work appropriately. It has evolved again, which is what Ms Spence was talking about, as far as the flexible education being offered in class, at Muliyan or in other kinds of settings. We need to be a little bit more flexible, so we are changing the way that we deliver flexible education across a range of different areas.

Muliyan is not set up in a traditional school setting; it is set up in an office, really, and it has been made to work for students. Again, that does not work for all students, which is why leaning towards these different kinds of offerings in flex ed has been what we have been working towards. It is also about working with our schools to make sure that they can be more inclusive for children who have a range of different challenges in their lives, which could include having spent some time at Bimberi, or it could be that they have complex lives, and challenging behaviour comes out of that in the way that they communicate what is going on at school. That is often not acceptable behaviour.

There is a whole range of work happening. Yes, there is a setting that will suit some students. There is flexible education across a range of different areas, which could be in their existing school or in an alternative off-site setting. There is also the work that we are doing within schools to support teachers and teaching professionals in how we can make our schools more inclusive for students across a range of different areas.

Ms Spence: We have increased our service offer at both Murrumbidgee school and the hospital school during the reporting period. The hospital expanded the amount of beds available for youth in their mental health unit; so, as part of our service offer, we expanded that to be able to provide an education offer for those young people that are currently staying in the adolescent mental health unit.

As well, our Murrumbidgee school service offer has increased to support those young people who may be coming in and out of Bimberi. It is really trying to focus on enhanced education services as part of a bridging program, as they come from Murrumbidgee, potentially into Muliyan or back into their local school setting. Obviously, we are continuing to look at better ways of providing the flexible education offering, and we will continue to do that in 2025.

MR EMERSON: Currently, there are no plans to increase the capacity from 30 young people?

Ms Spence: At this point, we need to undertake the review to be able to determine the best way to cater for the different numbers in all of our flexible education settings.

MR HANSON: With the implementation of the literacy and numeracy review that was conducted, on page 37 of the annual report, it says:

Development of a phased approach for implementation has commenced and will be released in early 2024-25. The Strong Foundations phase 1 implementation plan outlines 12 priority actions for completion in 2024 and 11 for 2025 from eight recommendations.

I have a whole series of questions here, but could you start by giving us an update on the progress of the implementation of phase 1 so far?

Ms Berry: Yes. Phase 1 was the start of the implementation of the trialling of the year 1 phonics test. That happened last year; around 29 or 30 schools participated in that first phase, so that we could make sure that we were implementing the assessment appropriately, and be able to provide some good information and advice for when it is rolled out this year, which is part of the second phase of the implementation plan to provide the year 1 phonics assessment across all schools.

Last year, we also provided \$700,000 in funding for K-2 evidence-informed resources; that is, decodable readers, as well as numeracy tools for schools. Included in the work that we have been doing so far, and particularly with around 200 beginning teachers this year, we have been delivering professional learning for teachers to be able to understand the Literacy and Numeracy Education Expert Panel's recommendations and how they will be rolled out across our system. I will ask Dr Moore to provide a little bit more detail on those.

Dr Moore: I have read and acknowledge the privilege statement. On the phonics test, just to confirm, it was 27 public schools that trialled the phonics test.

MR HANSON: You are doing a test run of it, are you, a "test and adjust", and then you will run it out more comprehensively?

Ms Berry: This year, yes.

MR HANSON: Did you get outcomes from the testing?

Dr Moore: The purpose of the piloting last year was to test how we would roll it out across the system. It was in 27 schools, and about 1,400 children participated. Of course, those schools would have those results on individual children. The intent was not to look at how children are performing; it was to look at how teachers would implement the phonics test and what supports they would need from the system to do that. We are now looking at the results of that piloting to inform how we will roll it out across all primary schools in 2025.

MR HANSON: Once you have rolled it out, you will get results, and I guess they are applied not only to an individual but also collectively. What do you do with the results? Is that put into a specific program or supports for that child? What happens?

Dr Moore: I might hand over to Ms Spence to answer as to what we do with it. With the data collection, absolutely; we make the data available to schools to use with their students.

Ms Spence: Thank you for the question, Mr Hanson. Obviously, the first thing, in terms of making appropriate changes to teaching and learning programs, is that the teachers need to have access to that information so that they can make immediate changes. What we learned through the pilot is that the teachers said that year 1 is possibly too late, the end of year 1. With some of the things we need to do, we need to support our teachers to do the ongoing check-ins in the lead-up to the end of year 1 check, to make sure that the young people are making the progress they need to make.

In terms of using the data at more of a system level, it will help to inform any targeted professional learning that we need to put in place for our teachers to support their implementation of explicit teaching of phonics. Also, the schools will use the information to change their improvement plans, for example, because they need to focus on something specific in reading, as opposed to numeracy.

It is the intent of the government to pick up, through the implementation of Strong Foundations, the numeracy check that is currently in development, so that we can use both of these tools to support the important critical learnings in numeracy and literacy.

MR HANSON: Will those phonics checks be data collated and then released publicly, so that we have some sense of the test over time—whether it is improving or getting worse, or where there are problem areas?

Dr Moore: Under the Better and Fairer Schools Agreement, all systems will be reporting on the proportion of schools that undertake the phonics test, not the individual student results of the phonics test.

MR HANSON: You said that there was \$700,000 for decodable readers. Have they been purchased and rolled out yet? What is the process there?

Ms Berry: It might not have always been decodable readers, because some schools are well in the space of delivering the Strong Foundations program of work. There are some schools that need additional support, but the schools that do not have the decodable readers can use the funding to access other tools, like numeracy tools to help with the numeracy work that we are doing as part of the Stronger Foundations.

MR HANSON: Can you confirm this for me: of that \$700,000, how much has actually been rolled out? Has it all been expended or are we part-way through that process? You can take that on notice, if you like.

Ms Spence: No, we are part-way through the process. Out of the \$700,000, there is some money that has been kept to do another rollout of the purchasing of materials for intervention programs, and different things like that, following a quality assurance process of resources, in line with the recommendations.

There will be an acquittal process for schools to undertake, as part of the initial rollout of that \$700,000, based on the recommendations of resources to purchase for literacy and numeracy. That will be undertaken midway through 2025, as part of the acquittal process. The second part of that will also be based on an application process where they apply for the extra funding to support the extra purchasing of other resources to support Strong Foundations.

MR HANSON: With that \$700,000, is that going to be rolled out or is it a staged approach and you will need to go back to the budget? How does that work?

Ms Spence: No, that will be expended by the end of this financial year.

MR HANSON: As that is rolling out, will it be enough?

Ms Spence: There is a phased implementation to the rollout of the resourcing. This is the P-2, preschool to year 2, resources; then, as we enter into the new financial cycle, there will be a commitment for resourcing for other ages and stages of schooling.

MR HANSON: Has that been budgeted or is that subject to a budget submission?

Ms Spence: As part of our agreement, under the Better and Fairer Schools Agreement, extra funding is being provided to support that rollout. The scoping work is being done under that extra funding to support the full delivery of the recommendations of the expert panel report, including resources being made available to each of the ages and stages of education.

MR HANSON: Could I go through the 2024 priority actions that come out of that report, to see where we are at with the progress? One of them is a new quality assurance process for teaching and learning resources used in schools, starting with literacy and numeracy. Could you tell me what that means?

Ms Spence: Yes. We have developed a quality assurance process over the most used literacy and numeracy resources and programs in schools. That was trialled at the end of 2024, to be able to make recommendations around those programs and resources that are most used in schools and the way in which they align with the recommendations.

When we talked about the money, the \$700,000 allocated, the learnings from the quality assurance process will inform that final phase of rollout of money on those resources that align strongly to the recommendations, as part of that implementation.

MR HANSON: Literacy and numeracy conferences for school leaders: has that been implemented?

Ms Spence: We hosted a leadership conference last week. The leadership conference focused on evaluative thinking and capability, which is an important part of how we use data and the way in which we make decisions about teaching and learning programs. That was a key part of that particular conference that we hosted for our school leaders. Plans for a specific literacy and numeracy conference, in addition to the leadership conferences, has not been fully determined at this particular point in time.

MR HANSON: Another one is: strengthening school-based professional learning to focus on monitoring student outcomes.

Ms Spence: Certainly, there has been a large investment in professional learning. That started this year with our new educators, with targeted literacy and numeracy sessions as part of our induction week. In addition to that, every school and every staff member, teacher, had their first introductory session of literacy and numeracy professional learning, aligned with the Strong Foundations program. That can be implemented in schools over the course of the first term. It equates to approximately five hours of TQI professional learning hours.

There has also been the development of targeted literacy and numeracy workshops that teachers can access on an as-needed basis. One of the first ones to be developed is around explicit teaching of phonics, aligned with the recommendations, so that we can support the implementation of the year 1 phonics check and teachers are getting the professional learning that they need. There is also professional learning around the pedagogical strategies outlined in the expert panel report that will be available to staff this year to support the implementation of those strategies in each of our schools.

MR HANSON: There was a delay to the start of the school year in a number of schools; is that right? There was extra training going on. We seemed to come back to school a bit later in the year than normal; no?

Ms Berry: No, Mr Hanson. It was the planned start to the school year.

MR HANSON: Another one is: additional funding for all schools for preschool to year 2 literacy and numeracy resources. That is the \$700,000, is it?

Ms Berry: Yes.

MR HANSON: Then there was work with other school systems to share literacy and numeracy resources.

Ms Spence: We have actually implemented our first approach in learning from other systems. We have a key principal reference group that is supporting the design of how to implement this across our system—all of those principals are engaged in visits to our

neighbours in Catholic education.

MR HANSON: Is this sort of looking at what they are doing with Catalyst and things like that?

Ms Spence: Different elements, their literacy and numeracy programs, how they implement and the lessons they have learnt, and bringing that back and actually debriefing on that to help inform and take their lessons learnt to really strengthen our implementation approach. We have ongoing contact with other jurisdictions—Tasmania, New South Wales and Victoria—as they implement their changes. Of course, we work with ACARA and AERO, because they have such strong connection points with other jurisdictions, to help inform our approach and, again, for those jurisdictions that may have been implementing prior to us, use their lessons learnt so that we can really strengthen our implementation approach.

MR HANSON: I have more, but I will give you a break so that others can have a go. You said that, with the Year 1 phonics check, some teachers just said, “That is too late.” As part of the review of all this, are you considering that we need to do it earlier or have a separate phonics check earlier? What would you do with that information?

Ms Spence: One of the recommendations the expert panel made to us was to really improve the assessment tools available to our staff across the system, so that they are using the same assessment tools. Probably in line with that recommendation is that, while there is a check done at the end of Year 1—and it needs to be done at the end of Year 1, because that correlates, then, with the expectations and standards of the Australian Curriculum—what has been highlighted is the need for common assessment tools so that we can do the ongoing checks prior to the end of Year 1 so that adjustments to learning programs for those that need it earlier are actually made earlier. That is in line with the multitiered systems of support approach, where young people, when they maybe do not have the same level of oral vocabulary, for example, might need to actually have a different type of intervention to help them increase their vocabulary, so that can support broader reading. It is more about the assessment tools that are made available prior to that—

MR HANSON: So sort of mini checks leading up. Okay.

Ms Spence: That is a key area of work through 2025. An investment has been made in progressive achievement tests, which are now available to all of our schools in 2025. One of those progressive achievement tests—PAT tests, we call them—is in the early childhood space in reading and numeracy. All of our schools have access this year and will be supported to implement those.

MR HANSON: All right. And I know I said that was going to be the last one, but are these checks being done at the school level or are they being done at the directorate level? Does the directorate come in and assist with these checks or is it all done at the school level?

Ms Spence: The checks are done at the school level. The directorate supports, I guess, the systematic nature of the types of checks that can be supported. Those checks are currently in development from the system, and then they will be supported through

professional learning.

MR HANSON: So they will be consistent across the various different schools, then?

Ms Spence: Correct, with schools making the decisions around the implementation based on a young person's progress and what checks are needed at what time based on that information.

MR HANSON: All right.

THE CHAIR: Just before I throw to Ms Tough, Dr Moore, earlier you said that the data on those Year 1 checks would be provided. What is the level of that transparency—that it be provided it back to the federal government or can it be made publicly available?

Dr Moore: In the Better Fairer Schools Agreement, in our bilateral implementation plan, every jurisdiction that signs on to the agreement, of course, has an obligation to report annually the proportion of schools that have participated in the Year 1 phonics. That will be a public report.

THE CHAIR: That will be made public and we will all be able to access it?

Dr Moore: Yes.

MS TOUGH: My question is about CECA, the regulator for early childhood education. Last week, we saw Genius Childcare in Gungahlin close for three days because the staff did not turn up to work after not being paid. At the end of last year, the centre in Gowrie had, I think, 16 of 17 permanent employees resign over pay issues and this week we have seen that Genius in Gungahlin has had their licence suspended for two weeks because of safety concerns. I am interested to know when CECA receives a notification about an incident or a complaint, how you go about conducting an investigation? What processes are there to ensure compliance, and what do you do if there is noncompliance?

Mr Moysey: I have read and acknowledge the privilege statement. We do a triage process of all incidents and complaints. There is a series of statutory obligations on providers and services to provide us with reports on incidents and complaints that are made to the service. We also get direct complaints. People can write to us directly and say, "I am not happy with what is happening with the service." On occasions, we have authorised officers who are going about their business doing audits, assessments and ratings and they might find issues as well.

When there are issues of noncompliance or suspicion there might be noncompliance, we assess each of those incidents and complaints and then we make a decision. It is a triage committee. We come together, we look at the material and we assess against the kinds of risks that are most common, which is harms, hazards and governance. Those are the three pillars that we use. Once we make a triage assessment, there are a variety of things we can do. If we think it is an immediate risk—and we can triage things that we think are an immediate risk—that is where we might do an emergency audit and go out straightaway. If we think it is a risk that is part of the system—for example, there

is something wrong in the process or there is a gap there, we might do a risk audit. If we think that risk is ongoing—for example, there is something systemic—we might have a series of risk audits. We might also do an investigation. We might do both. It really depends.

Generally, we do not disclose investigations, and generally the complainant is often the person who is the first witness. That complainant could be somebody who is actually working at the service, and so there might be some underlying issues that we need to look at there. In some cases, our authorised officers might be raising compliance issues themselves.

So we triage and then, after triage, whether it is an audit or an investigation, if there is evidence that warrants compliance action, that material is put together, and then we have a case management committee which assesses that evidence and has a recommendation or a view about what is the appropriate consequence of those issues. Out of that decision, we have a decision-making policy, which is about what level of the regulator should the decision be made—that is relevant to the consequences and the seriousness of the issue—and then a decisionmaker makes the decision. The decision-maker does not inherently have to follow exactly what case management has determined, because they have to actually apply the evidence to the law and, in the end, they are the decision-maker.

MS TOUGH: When a service is suspended, for example, does CECA work with that service to help them get up to being compliant during that closed period?

Mr Moysey: The onus is on the provider. The way the national law works is that there is a process to become an approved provider, which these days includes a test. It is designed so that anybody can learn how to do it, but it is designed to make sure that there is expertise in the provider as well. If you decide that you want to buy an early childhood service and become a provider, you can learn that, but it contemplates that you have to become expert in it. The design of the law is to have continuous improvement. Sorry; can you restart the question again? I have lost track.

MS TOUGH: Whether during a suspension CECA works with the provider.

Mr Moysey: The whole point of national law is it expects the providers to be expert in what they do. It deems them to be knowledgeable of the law. Our expectation is that every provider is wanting their service to be high quality—so the national quality standard that they are actually meeting and above. The idea is for a continuous journey to exceeding. Again, the expectation is that the provider is considering what has gone wrong, looks at the feedback that we have given in various forms—it might be an assessment rating, might be the audits, might be through the formal show-cause notice and decision that we have made—and to work on those problematic areas. If there are issues where they are not clear on what the expectation is, we will work with them. In most cases where there is a closure or an emergency action notice, for example, we will do an audit to look at how to address those issues. Obviously, part of addressing that is showing how they are supporting the service to achieve that.

MS TOUGH: If there is a closure, do you work with providers to help those families have other care or communicate with the families about what is going on in that period?

Mr Moysey: Under the national law, the onus is on the provider to communicate with the families. Their standards expect that level of engagement from the provider with a family. So that is part of our expectation too.

MISS NUTTALL: It sounds like there have been a few times where possibly national law has meant that follow-ups might not necessarily be as quick, or you might not have jurisdiction to support families in the immediate short term. Have you made any representations to federal education ministers, for example, to talk about what you might be able to do to make sure that the national law allows us to intervene when there is a serious concern?

Ms Berry: Though we have not had a meeting yet, I have raised it with our federal government as well as state and territory ministers. I think nearly every state and territory minister would have some experience in the space where early childhood settings are being monitored. So they are all keen to figure out a way through what changes could be made at the national level so that regulations, governments or somebody can do something different or more.

THE CHAIR: I had intended to declare a conflict of interest that I have, which is that my mother, Catherine Hudson, is the Chair of the Board of Senior Secondary Studies. If you happen to have questions along those lines, I might pass to the deputy chair to manage that part of the hearing.

MISS NUTTALL: Let's talk about workload reduction. Could you please tell me which workload reduction measures have been introduced for public schoolteachers?

Ms Berry: Thanks, Miss Nuttall. I will just get another witness to the table. One of the things that we have done is actually enforcing the contract cleaning, which has also made a difference as far as the management of those contracts at school level. That has been in place for five years now. We just had our fifth-year anniversary. That is a really proud moment for cleaners who are in our public school system, but it also does make a difference to workload. We are also talking with our schools about the building service officers and what that might mean as far as workload reduction in administrative spaces but also giving us a better handle on the improvements that need to be made across our infrastructure across our school system.

But, more to that, there are other different workload reductions that we have been working on with the Australian Education Union. We still have some way to go here. So we are not suggesting that we have solved any of the problems. But we are working through a really changed education system, I think, and trying to figure out, with educators, teachers and school principals, what things we could do so that they concentrate on what they do best, which is teaching.

Mr Matthews: I have read and understand the privilege statement. As the minister was saying, workload reduction is an ongoing task that we have. We have a slogan, which we share with the Australian Education Union, which is "Let leaders lead and let teachers teach." What that is about is acknowledging the specific expertise of our school leaders and teachers and giving them as much time to focus on that core role. The things that the minister was touching on are some structural elements around that. If we can

improve our cleaning services, then that is something that our school leaders do not have to worry about as much on a day-to-day basis. If we look at our maintenance and our building infrastructure support that we offer to schools, there is less focus on that.

We also have other groups of workforce in our schools, particularly our business managers, our administrative staff and our learning support assistants. They all perform a vital role. In fact, what we have on a day-to-day basis in our schools is a multidisciplinary team approach where we have lots of different professionals working together to make sure that schools are well managed, safe and that, particularly, our educators can focus on teaching and learning.

In our last enterprise agreement, we agreed to some specific workload management measures, which have been successfully rolled out, including the additional pupil free days. That commenced last year. There is also designated preparation and planning time for teachers. As part of their day-to-day work there is a minimum amount of time of three hours that they get off class to do that teaching and learning activity.

Also, the Education Directorate led out on the right to disconnect. That is really about saying, “When you are at work, we want you to be your best self. But, when you are not at work, there is no expectation that you need to take calls or need to be able to respond to additional work requests.” We actually rolled that out prior to the implementation of the Fair Work Commission finding. We do a survey on an annual basis of our school communities, including our teaching staff. Each of those measures that I have mentioned has shown a positive response from school leaders and teachers about their workload. So that is fantastic. Overall, we have seen a positive impact on people’s perceptions of workload. As I said, that said, it is certainly a far from finished task.

In terms of the earlier questions around Strong Foundations, for example, there are many workload benefits that can come from really strong system support around how literacy and numeracy is taught. That is something that we are very much keeping in mind in the implementation of that approach—system PL, system resources and very clear system expectations on teaching and learning strategies. All of that means that individual teachers are not left to work it out for themselves or to be unclear about what their expectations of them are. We are continuing to look into other important areas, like the assessment and reporting requirements around how schools communicate with families and their communities and also, the range of excursions and events that take place within a school.

Schools are communities, and I think we all know that, and that is what we really most value about them. So it is very important that schools can operate like that. Those needs do vary but, in an overall system sense, we absolutely want to make sure that every school leader and teacher has a manageable workload. We are going to continue to work on that front to make sure that we can support them as professionals and support all of our professionals as well. I want to do that callout to our other paraprofessionals and administrative staff in schools. They perform a really important role. All of that is about focusing on kids learning.

MISS NUTTALL: Thank you. What of the actions that you have listed were not part of the recent enterprise bargaining agreement?

Mr Matthews: The first few that I mentioned, Miss Nuttall, are part of that agreement—the additional student free days, the designated release time and the right to disconnect and the other measures that I spoke about, including those communication responsibilities, assessment and reporting, excursion events, individual support arrangements for students and behavioural support. There is a range of those measures. We have a committee. A committee is a good solution but not a complete solution to this. We have a tripartite committee of the directorate, the AEU and our principals to really focus on what we can do. That committee was working all through last year with classroom teachers and school leaders on that and is working through each of those initiatives. We think workload is a combination of very small and very big measures, so that we can make sure that all of the system settings are right. We are going to keep chipping away at that small and big level to make sure that leaders can lead and teachers can teach.

MISS NUTTALL: Sweet. Thank you. You mentioned individual support arrangements and behavioural support. Could I trouble you to elaborate a little bit on what those exact measures are?

Mr Matthews: My colleague Dr Moore can talk in a lot of detail about our Inclusions Strategy. This is a good example. As we are trying to implement positive reforms around being safe and inclusive school communities, we are also looking at how we best support students and what the workload impact is. Obviously, some of those students have a range of individual plans that are in place—learning support plans or adjustments that are in place. Again, it is something that the directorate can scaffold and support, as an example. Obviously, how we have our inclusion coaches and how they lean into those individual schools to help with practice also is the support for teachers and school leavers that are undertaking those duties on a day-to-day basis. And I mentioned professional learning before as well. Whether it be Strong Foundations, inclusive education, work—indeed, all of the work that we are trying to do—we are focused on how we provide the right support, how we are clear on expectations and how we make things as efficient as possible.

MISS NUTTALL: Beautiful. Thank you. Just on those learning support plans and the directorate scaffolding them, is that something that has happened previously? Has that been a new policy to essentially provide a little more hands-on support to teachers for the learning support plans as well as delivering those plans?

Mr Matthews: It has certainly been an ongoing role that we have played, Miss Nuttall. But we are doing some specific changes around how assessment occurs within schools and also, in future, how funding arrangements occur. It is really about recalibrating and making sure that we are continuing to do that in the most appropriate way. That means our values but also our legal obligations. As I said, it is a good example of a body of work that we are engaging in, which is not new but this new reform work is. Really, it is about how we implement that in the best possible way.

MISS NUTTALL: What would you say the biggest blocker to additional measures to reduce workload is? Are there any gaps and are there any points where maybe there is like something that could be done but it is just—

Mr Matthews: That is a really important question and one we have talked about at the committee a lot, Miss Nuttall. There is a lot around community expectations and the needs of the different communities and different students in our schools. Our teachers are so committed to their mission that they want to be able to meet all of the needs of their students and all of the needs of their community. It is a bit never ending. One of the things that individual schools need from the directorate is support and backing about what those reasonable limits are, particularly, as I said, going back to the right to disconnect. While people are at work, they work very hard and we want them to do the most valuable activities. That is the ongoing task that we are trying to work towards. But there are also limits on that. That works at a system level, at a school level and at the individual teacher level.

Ms Berry: On the right to disconnect, I think it is really important that we make sure our community and our school communities understand that teachers have done a full day when they get an email at 10 o'clock at night. We are saying, "No; you do not answer the email. It is something you do during work hours." We have to make sure that our communities understand that that is not going to happen now. This is not a 24-7 service. Our teachers and professionals and they need a break too.

MS BARRY: You talked about letting leaders lead and teachers teach. I have received several reports from teachers across Canberra's public schools that it takes a very long time to respond to building maintenance issues. You may need to take this on notice, but do you have data on how many building maintenance notices you get and how long it takes to respond to those issues?

Mr Matthews: Ms Barry, one of my colleagues may be able to further expand on this, if required. But, essentially, we triage all of those building maintenance issues first on the basis of health and safety. Anything that is a critical health and safety issue gets a very immediate response. Then, I guess, it really depends on the nature of that building maintenance issue. There can be things that are very important in terms of day-to-day operations of schools, like the core infrastructure of classrooms, and there are other maintenance issues which are really just about making sure that things are working as intended. I will pass to my colleague Ms Attridge if she has anything further to add to that. But, essentially, I just wanted to emphasise that we really make sure that any health and safety requirements around maintenance are addressed straightaway.

MS BARRY: Would broken air conditioning be a health and safety requirement to fix? Where would that fall in the scale of—

Ms Attridge: I have read and understand the privilege statement. The maintenance work that happens in our schools happens in a variety of ways. There are some more business-as-usual school maintenance responsibilities that schools are responsible for delivering and then there are other works where they tend to be more major maintenance works that are delivered by the Education Directorate. Accordingly, there are different timeframes for when maintenance is delivered.

There is a planned program of asset renewal program upgrades that happen throughout the year, essentially on an ongoing basis, but on an annual rolling program. There are also more urgent or reactive works where they are needed to address something like an air conditioning unit if that fails or needs maintenance. It happens in a variety of

different ways.

MS BARRY: Thank you. Would you have data on how many maintenance requests you get and how long it takes to respond to maintenance requests? Would that be something that you could—

Ms Attridge: We certainly would, in the sense of specific school reporting—say, a piece of equipment that needed maintenance and the time that was taken to procure services. Sometimes, where it is maintenance that the directorate is responsible for providing, there might be a procurement process and work with our delivery partners in Infrastructure Canberra as well to deliver some of those services. Sometimes it takes a bit of time.

MS BARRY: Are you happy to take on notice providing that data to the committee?

Ms Attridge: For a specific—

MS BARRY: Across Canberra’s public schools, how many maintenance requests have you received and how long has it taken to respond?

Ms Wood: We can take on notice to look at the data we have. As Ms Attridge just said, there are different categories, so there might not be one number. We will look at what we have on notice.

MS BARRY: Thank you.

MR HANSON: Going back to the implementation of the literacy and numeracy review, it says that in 2024 the directorate was going to upgrade data tools for teachers so they can easily see assessment results. Was that done?

Ms Spence: Yes. There is investment being made in our data information system that we have available. A key part of that is getting our learning data into that particular system as part of enhanced access to that information. All of our school leaders currently have access to learning data in that system, and work is underway to release that information to our teachers as well.

MR HANSON: When do you expect that is going to happen?

Ms Spence: During this year.

MR HANSON: Also listed are new fact sheets for families on how to best support students with literacy and numeracy. Did that happen?

Ms Spence: They are currently under development. In line with the release of the policy and the teaching approach, those materials will become available so that our staff—

MR HANSON: And that is this year?

Ms Spence: Yes.

MR HANSON: Is that to all parents and families or just those identified as having an issue?

Ms Spence: All parents and families will be given information around the teaching and learning approaches that we use in our schools.

MR HANSON: Following on from that, it says to consult with students, schools, families and communities on new initiatives and programs. What feedback did the directorate get as part of that consultation? Has it occurred? And what consultation feedback was there?

Ms Spence: A part of the program was to really strengthen implementation. Different groups have been set up to provide input to the implementation, noting that implementation is a recommendation on its own. One of those particular groups has a representative from a P&C association and other key stakeholders, such as our unions. The thing that we are hearing from those particular stakeholder groups is the importance of workload reduction and the importance of providing materials to our teachers to support them in designing, teaching and learning, and programs to best meet students' needs but without having to do all of that research and taking the time associated with that.

The other thing that we are hearing from families is around the importance of communication and to support them in understanding what we are implementing at a point in time, and to engage them through that process so that they have consistent information coming to them; it is not different from school to school. That is helping inform the strong implementation approach and consistency of implementation across each of our schools.

MR HANSON: The plan also says that it requires provision of a rigorous approach to monitor and assess the effectiveness of Strong Foundations. Are you going to incorporate NAPLAN and PISA and any other external reviews as part of that evaluation or is it going to be an internal evaluation? How are you going to do that to make sure it is actually doing what we hope it will?

Ms Spence: Part of the phase 1 implementation is around program development and implementation. A comprehensive evaluation is part of that. One of the key benefits outlined in the program is improved outcomes for students in literacy and numeracy, and therefore NAPLAN data plays a critical role in that measure. Other measures will include equity outcomes, which we currently measure, and that will be used as part of the implementation of the full program. Another key area for us is around our community's understanding of the way in which we teach literacy and numeracy. That will be built into the evaluation, with external measures coming from, for example, things like family surveys that we do annually, to look at those elements of program implementation.

MR HANSON: The plan outlines that former members of the expert panel will conduct an independent review of implementation progress on an annual basis. When is that due?

Ms Spence: We have ongoing contact with our expert panel, who have been extremely

generous with their time. During the course of 2025, they will be invited back as a panel and we will brief them on the implementation of phase 1, and they will provide feedback in a more formalised way as part of that process,

MR HANSON: I presume that is a report to the minister.

Ms Berry: I do not think we have made a decision on where it goes.

Ms Spence: I do not think so.

MR HANSON: Will that be available to this committee, so that we have an external check on how it is all progressing?

Ms Berry: We would probably want to make sure that it is provided publicly, but that will happen at a later time—probably when this committee is doing other work. But we can definitely provide—

MR HANSON: Will it be tabled in the Assembly?

Ms Berry: I think we can do that. It is important that people understand the journey that we have been going on together with our schools, so that we can make sure that everybody is well supported, but we also want to make sure that we are achieving all of the goals and implementing all the recommendations. One of the things that is probably going to be more challenging than the literacy is the numeracy space. Mr Hanson, thank you for agreeing to include that in the recommendations in the Assembly motion on that matter, because it is an area that all states and territories are struggling with. Finding the expertise in that space is a bit of a challenge. We are not giving up. We had some experts on the panel who were very knowledgeable in that space. Having them coming back and helping us understand what we need to do to introduce and improve numeracy outcomes in our schools will be incredibly beneficial.

MR HANSON: As part of your evaluation, have you identified class size as being an issue? Obviously, there is a lot going on. You are trying to provide individual supports to particular students. Has class size and the number of students come up as part of the concerns raised by teachers at all?

Ms Spence: As part of the Strong Foundations work that we have been doing, we have not engaged in class size discussions, nor has it been raised by any staff, to my knowledge, around the implementation. If you are referring to the multitiered systems of support, then that is programmed to be designed and developed this year. Engagement around how to implement that in our schools systematically will be a key area of work over the course of 2025.

MR HANSON: More broadly, though, has class size come forward as an issue, either from teachers or through the union?

Ms Berry: We negotiate with the Australian Education Union in particular around class sizes. What class sizes are required to be is contained in our agreement. Remember that, in most cases, our schools do not operate within a closed classroom style education. They are moving towards more open-plan class delivery rather than a classroom, if you

like. But we make sure that we are working with, again, our school teachers and leaders about how we do that in a way that does not increase workloads, and also ensure that we are meeting our teacher numbers within our schools with our ongoing recruitment programs. Did you want to add something, Mr Matthews?

Mr Matthews: Only very briefly, Minister. We are engaged with the AEU on the class size guideline. As the minister said, it is an agreed policy under our enterprise agreement. The purpose of that is to set maximum class sizes. Most classes are below that maximum. We are always engaged in those discussions with them. As has been mentioned regarding Strong Foundations, we want to be able to differentiate teaching and learning to all children within those classes. Class sizes, in an overall sense, are an important factor, but that is just one of a number of factors.

MR HANSON: Sure. If I go back to 2008, there was a commitment from the Labor government that there would be a maximum of 21 students in primary and high school classrooms and no more than 19 in college classes. That was a commitment that was rolled out by the Labor Party in 2008. When was that promise broken, or was it never implemented?

Mr Matthews: Mr Hanson, that is before my time in education. But I can say that we have a binding agreement with the AEU through the enterprise agreement, which has class sizes in it. We have certainly met that requirement. There is also an understanding that there is a negotiation process, where there might be one or two children above those guidelines.

MR HANSON: Sadly, I was on this committee, or its forerunner, back then. There was a commitment made at an election that we would reduce class sizes down to 21 and 19. Maybe you could take on notice whether, historically, that was ever implemented or we ever got close to that, or whether there was a deliberate decision to reverse that policy. Unless that has been announced as not being policy—it was announced by the government at an election that they were going to roll that out—where is that up to?

Ms Berry: You are well back to a time when none of us were here. I understand you were here and heard the announcement made, and I think things have evolved and moved on a lot since then. We reached agreement with the AEU on the numbers now through our enterprise bargaining negotiations. That does not mean that is the end of it. We are obviously continuing to work with the Australian Education Union on what is best practice and how we can support our teachers in that space. We can take it on notice and see what we can find out, but you are asking us to go through time and it might be difficult for us to get the information that you are actually after.

MR HANSON: If you have anything, I would be interested. There was \$22 million promised. Was it put into a budget? One would presume it was.

Ms Berry: You could look at the budget papers, Mr Hanson. We will see what we have.

MR HANSON: Thanks.

MR RATTENBURY: I want to ask about the upgrades at Majura Primary School in Watson. Could somebody provide me insight on where that project is up to, please?

Ms Berry: We made commitments to some upgrades and modernisation of Majura Primary School, as you know, and that included an increase in student numbers, as well as modernisation of school infrastructure. Following the consultations that we had with the school community, the school community wanted to have more detail around the project and to better understand why the Education Directorate had come to the decision it had with the existing commitment.

Through that process, we decided to pause the project just before the election. I realise there has been some time between then and now, but we are in the process of re-engaging with the school about the modernisation and the increase in the number of students in the inner north. We need to provide more spaces. There are more students coming. We believe that Majura is best placed to provide for an increase in the number of students. We are reassessing what that number is, because things change over years. We want to make sure we have the right figures in place, which is what Majura asked us for as well.

At the moment, we are still in that pause, but we are moving towards having another conversation with the school community. We understand they have a range of inquiries about where it is sitting right now, but there are also the aspirations for the school, so we want to listen to them about what that looks like. Again, it might be something that cannot be delivered immediately, given we have already made a commitment. That will be part of the budget processes. Ms Attridge, you may have more on that, or somebody else might.

MR RATTENBURY: That is a great start. I have a couple of specific questions. Let me see if we can work through them. Minister, you have spoken about the number of students at the school. Is there a maximum number of students for a primary school under Education Directorate standards?

Ms Berry: No.

MR RATTENBURY: So a school can be any size?

Ms Berry: Yes.

MR RATTENBURY: What is the current number of students at Majura?

Ms Berry: We can take that on notice. I will get the exact number. We have had the school size question at times across the ACT. We have very large schools and very small schools, if you describe them that way, based on the number of students. If you compare ours to some of the schools in New South Wales or other states and territories, ours are moderately sized, even our larger ones. Our perspective on that is that it is about the quality of the teaching and the support that goes into providing good education. The quality of our teachers makes the impact, not so much the size of the school.

MR RATTENBURY: You said you will take on notice the current number of—

Ms Berry: I was just told that our enrolment figures have just been completed.

MR RATTENBURY: Of course, it is that time of year.

Ms Berry: It might be a moment before we have that detail.

MR RATTENBURY: That is quite all right, whether it is today or you come back on notice. I am keen to understand what the projected numbers are for Majura. You said you are working on that, but it would be useful to know what the current estimate is. Are you able to answer that now?

Ms Berry: That is the work that the directorate has been doing since I announced the pause, following the conversation with the Majura school community. I do not know whether we have that based on the enrolment numbers. We are still working on those this year. I cannot give you the number. I do not know whether you can, Ms Attridge.

Ms Attridge: I am sorry, I do not have them with me today.

MR RATTENBURY: That is okay. I am happy to have those on notice. You spoke about engaging with the school community. Can you tell me what the plans are for consultation with the school community?

Ms Attridge: Yes. We had a number of opportunities to consult and engage with the school community and representatives of the community through the P&C and board, and also with staff at the school towards the end of last year. We made that commitment, as the minister was saying, to have some further engagement with the community early this year, and that will focus on their aspirations for their school in the future and what can be delivered through expansion and modernisation.

MR RATTENBURY: In terms of those aspirations, the government initially committed \$39.3 million in 2022 for the expansion and modernisation of the school. This was increased to \$51.9 million through a budget process, as we recall. The government's Built for CBR website currently outlines what is planned for these upgrades. Can you confirm that the community will still receive the key promised elements, including a new gymnasium in Hall and adequate upgrades to existing learning areas and school infrastructure to meet relevant standards for a school this size?

Ms Attridge: When the additional funding was provided, we then provided some further information to the school community around the scope of what was able to be delivered through that funding and a proposed design that we have developed up to this point in time, and that proposed design does not include a new gymnasium. We communicated that to the community around that time to make sure that they were aware. Sorry—what was the second part of the question?

MR RATTENBURY: The other part was about the existing learning areas. Are they being upgraded to modern standards?

Ms Attridge: What we have said to the community thus far is that, with a project like this, until we have a design confirmed, a head contractor appointed and a program, we cannot confirm what the scope of modernisation would be. That would all be subject to those decisions and a head contractor being engaged.

MR RATTENBURY: Thank you. I am told that the existing facilities at Majura Primary currently fall below the Education Directorate's infrastructure standards for a school of this size. Is that your understanding as well?

Ms Attridge: There is a lot of variety in all of our established public schools. Comparing an established public school to our infrastructure specifications is not really comparing apples with apples, because our infrastructure specifications come into play when we are delivering brand new schools. There will always be some variation in established schools, so there could be some difference between the two.

MR RATTENBURY: Would you expect that the school would meet those infrastructure standards after the upgrade has been put in place? Is that the way it works, or are there particular standards that you strive to achieve during an upgrade process?

Ms Attridge: It would depend specifically on the project itself and the extent of the upgrade and modernisation. It could be that part of a school is upgraded, rather than an entire school being replaced with the newest standard and the EDIS specifications.

MR RATTENBURY: Thank you. Are you able to tell me, possibly on notice, how much of the allocated funds of the project have already been spent and provide a breakdown of the spending to date?

Ms Attridge: I believe \$852,000 has been spent to date, which is primarily the cost of the design consultant. I am sorry; I might be speaking for Infrastructure Canberra there.

MR RATTENBURY: Terrific. Thank you. One of the scenarios that was flagged for Majura Primary School was the possibility of, rather than working on the current reasonably constrained site, actually building a new school on the oval next door and then turning the old school into an oval. That is a story that floats around. Is that scenario still on the table as an option or has it been dismissed as part of the planning process?

Ms Attridge: At this stage, an entire new school built on a different parcel of land is not something that we are looking into.

MR RATTENBURY: Thank you. Finally, one of the key concerns of the parent community at the moment is that students are situated in classrooms that have heating and cooling problems. We know that this is a problem in older schools. The parents have suggested that it would be appropriate to prioritise improving existing classroom conditions. Is it a focus of the Education Directorate now to make sure that things like basic heating and cooling and such issues are addressed?

Ms Attridge: We are certainly aware of the school community's interest in that, and it has been raised with us directly as well. We have made note of that. That is something that will be considered as the design is considered further. Future decisions around what will be delivered and the extent of modernisation that will be delivered could consider that sort of thing, but that will be subject to future decisions.

MR RATTENBURY: Thank you. When will you advise the school community of what the consultation timetable is going to look like? Is it now the Education Directorate or Infrastructure Canberra leading the project?

Ms Attridge: I can talk to the engagement, but—

Ms Geraghty: You can do the first bit and I will do the second bit.

Ms Attridge: We will certainly provide an update to the school committee very soon, now that term 1 has kicked off. We know that people will be eager to know when we are coming to start these conversations. We will provide an update to them very soon around what the timeframe will look like and the types of consultation and engagement opportunities that will be made available through the process.

MR RATTENBURY: Thank you.

Ms Geraghty: I have read and acknowledge the privilege statement. As part of the administrative order changes from 8 November last year, Infrastructure Canberra is now accountable for the works at Majura, with the Education Directorate being our client.

MR RATTENBURY: Thank you very much.

THE CHAIR: Can you provide any indication of the type of consultation and whether it will be limited to the provision of information as opposed to actually receiving input from the school community to inform the design?

Ms Berry: We have already talked with the school about the kind of consultation and what that might look like. The decision that we made was to pause it last year, after the conversation with them. It will definitely be a two-way process.

THE CHAIR: I have a series of questions on Strong Foundations, which we have been talking about. My first question is: how does the government plan to address the educational gap for students who have fallen behind as a consequence of not having had these evidence-based teaching practices in place? I am thinking particularly about those who are currently below grade level proficiency in literacy and numeracy, as we have seen in our recent NAPLAN results.

Ms Wood: Mr Emerson, I might start the answer and then hand over to Ms Spence. One thing that is important to emphasise is that part of Strong Foundations and the advice from the panel is that we need a more consistent approach across ACT schools. There have been different approaches. Some of those approaches will align quite strongly with the evidence-based models that are being encouraged system wide. Ms Spence can speak specifically to how we intend to work on meeting the needs of all children, and particularly where there are challenges for those children in literacy and numeracy performance.

Ms Spence: One of the recommendations was around the implementation across all of our schools of multi-tiered systems of support and being able to provide the data to be able to make important decisions around the appropriate steps that we need to take to support those young people that might not be progressing as we would expect.

A key part of that is around the assessment tools that we provide across our system in a consistent way, so that our teachers can make those decisions through the teaching

and learning programs in an ongoing way, so that they can then look at their resourcing and adjust into small group teaching or individual teaching, as necessary. As part of the Strong Foundations rollout, we will be working with our schools around designing a more consistent approach to that way of operating, so that the decisions can be made more consistently, and we can learn from one another.

Just last week, I was visiting one of our schools, and I could see this in action in a secondary science classroom. They had two classes put together, with a teacher doing explicit instruction of a science lesson, and with another teacher providing some small group instruction, as part of that particular lesson. With respect to those young people, when I asked the teacher why they were doing that, it was around the explicit teaching of vocabulary that was needed to engage in that science lesson.

That is a really good example of describing how we will address the specific teaching and learning that is required for those children who might need something different or something more. That example is a good way, when we implement the multi-tiered systems of support, of helping to address the small group and individual instruction that will be needed.

A key part of the program is also to support the professional learning of our teachers and learning support assistants, so that they are able to support the small group and individual instruction in literacy and numeracy, as part of implementing that particular model.

In terms of the data, a key investment is being made, and we have started the rollout of having the information available to our schools so that they can see the growth and the progress that young people are making in an ongoing way that was not previously available to our schools. A key commitment of Strong Foundations is to continue to improve our data systems so that our teachers can make those decisions to support the implementation of multi-tiered systems of support in an ongoing way and more consistently across each of our 92 schools, because they are using similar assessment tools to be able to make those decisions.

THE CHAIR: If we are catching up kids who are falling behind, is small group tutoring going to be available in all of those schools?

Ms Spence: With what we do in our schools, small group tutoring refers to small group instruction. Part of the multi-tiered systems of support is to be able to provide small group instruction for those children who need more attention and more support to engage successfully in the learning. That is absolutely a part of multi-tiered systems of support implementation, as well as individual instruction provided at school for those who require that, which is the top tier of the multi-tiered systems of support.

THE CHAIR: My understanding is that the inquiry used the language “small group tutoring”, but you have corrected me and said “small group instruction”. Can you explain whether there is a difference there?

Ms Spence: It is about common terminology and what we understand from the evidence. The recommendation around multi-tiered systems of support talked about “instruction”. As part of the implementation around the evidence of multi-tiered systems of support,

they use the word “instruction”. We have made a decision to use the word “instruction”—

THE CHAIR: Is there any difference in the practice itself?

Ms Spence: Not necessarily; sometimes, with “tutoring”, people think of tutoring from external providers. This is about what we do in our schools, using all of our available resources to make that happen. I think that example of the way that was implemented in the science classroom that I observed last week shows how we leverage our resources to be able to provide that instruction, as necessary, including with our learning support assistants, who also provide a valuable resource for our schools to support teaching and learning, as necessary.

THE CHAIR: Ms Wood and Mr Matthews both mentioned that the goal is to have a consistent approach, which we would all agree on. How do the commitments that have been made, in terms of the Strong Foundations reforms, align with expenditure decisions that are made by individual schools when it comes to things like professional development and teaching resources? For instance, you have IB schools who are investing in IB-specific professional development resources. Other schools might invest in the future schools approach or bring in different consultants of various kinds. Are you concerned about the individual school-level expenditure and how it might conflict with the objective of establishing a consistent, evidence-based approach across the entire system?

Ms Spence: The recommendation around a systematic, consistent approach to teaching and learning was something that came out of the expert panel report. In order to achieve that, for us it is around the decisions we make in line with the teaching and learning approach and the policy setting. Those two pieces of work are currently going through the design and development phases, so that every school across the ACT is considering the decisions they make, to ensure that there is alignment with the policy setting that has been based on the recommendations of the expert panel report.

In regard to professional learning and resources, certainly, our investment in the resources that we are also providing through the \$700,000 that we talked about earlier is something that our schools need to align with, as part of their decision-making. They need to acquit that, as part of that process.

With the professional learning, there are different types of professional learning that will be mandated. For example, there was the mandatory professional learning that every school undertook, as part of the rollout of the Strong Foundations program. There will be optional professional learning which schools can uptake to support the implementation of that particular approach.

One of the key vehicles for our schools when aligning their practices to those recommendations will be through the implementation of our student incentive improvement framework. Our schools set targets and define strategies which they need to implement to improve the outcomes for young people; then they make decisions around the professional learning or the resources that they might use. As part of that process, they will need to work with their executive educational leader to define the implementation approach and, through that, there will need to be alignment with the

particular policy and teaching approaches outlined in the expert panel report.

THE CHAIR: Will the directorate have the power essentially to go in and say, “This expenditure doesn’t align with the direction that we are all heading in”? I understand the value of individual schools making decisions and having their own culture; I think that is really positive. But we saw with the Catholic schools that they can pretty much say, “This is what we’re going to do everywhere,” and I have had concerns raised that, when you already have people moving in different directions, a huge cultural shift is required.

Where there is still investment of public resources in professional development and those sorts of things that are not aligned with where we are trying to head, is there a mechanism for making sure that that is not happening? I know you have outlined various things; I am wondering how hands-on the government intends to be or whether that will be left in the hands of the schools, which might otherwise be motivated to—

Ms Berry: There are a couple of things here. When you are making this kind of change in a school system, we want to make sure that we bring people along on the journey with us and that they support the changes we are making. That is what we have been doing. We have been on a really positive change of reform with our schools.

As I said earlier, some of our schools and teachers need more professional learning. Other schools are well on the journey and have been for years. We have a mix of schools that we need to bring up to a particular standard, and we do that by trusting that our schools are buying into the program and having confidence in them as professionals that they want to see this as a systemised approach.

We have talked with our school leaders, in particular, about the success of a system in the ACT, and we have shown that through the rollout of our free Chromebooks. We showed that through COVID and working online, and working across our schools as a system, so that they know and we know that they are stronger when they work together. They get that, and we are going to support them through it.

At this stage we have a very positive approach from our schools, who want to be part of this change and want to be schools that can lead other schools who are not quite there yet. Part of the whole program is that we have these schools that are absolutely leading in a particular space, using their expertise and how they have implemented these sorts of programs over the years to support those schools that might not be at the same level of professional development or learning. We are not about pulling out a stick and—

THE CHAIR: You are going for carrots over sticks, yes.

Ms Berry: Yes. We have watched carefully as other states have rolled out reform. Victoria would be pretty open about some of the failings, with implementing it too fast; that did not work, particularly around how they were going to do the smaller group instruction during a teaching workforce crisis. They have had to take a big step back regarding how they are implementing this program.

We have also learned from and listened to the Catholic education system, who have said that they learned things. It was not perfect for them at the start, and I think they

would say that openly to other people as well. They are learning as they are going through this process of what they are implementing in their schools.

For us, we trust our schoolteachers and school staff. Their professionalism means that they want to be on this journey with us. That is certainly what we have been hearing.

MR HANSON: Ms Spence, you talked earlier about explicit instruction. There has been a bit of a debate about the balance between “explicit instruction” and “inquiry-based learning”. Coming out of these reforms, is there some sort of shift there? Has that been left at the individual school level or does the directorate have a view that there needs to be greater emphasis on explicit instruction, particularly in the younger years?

Ms Spence: That is a really good question. Certainly, explicit instruction and guided inquiry have both been recommended as teaching practices from the expert panel. When designing teaching and learning, explicit instruction is absolutely necessary to support any kind of guided inquiry. If learners do not have the appropriate skills, it is hard to implement a guided inquiry approach, which is necessary, in the learning space, to transfer learning to a new context, which is a really important part of the way in which young people learn.

MR HANSON: I get that. That is the theory behind it. I am asking whether, as a result of this, there has been a change in emphasis. I know there are particular schools where there is a heavy reliance on inquiry-based learning, and there were certainly concerns from the parents that that was an overemphasis. Have there been adjustments as a result?

Ms Spence: A very important part of the teaching and learning policy and our teaching approach is that all schools, especially in the early years, will be required to conduct explicit teaching of skills, and they will also be required to demonstrate when they use guided inquiry. They are relevant to different subject areas, but there is an emphasis in the early years around explicit teaching of the early skills. However, in a secondary education context, explicit teaching also plays a very big role, as part of a teaching and learning cycle.

MR HANSON: Has there been an emphasis change, then, a little bit more towards explicit as opposed to inquiry?

Ms Spence: I think every school is different. Depending on the school context, as Minister Berry explained, some schools have lots of explicit teaching, and less on inquiry. Some schools have more inquiry and not much explicit. This is about bringing us all onto the same page so that we are working as one system, where the balance between explicit teaching and the way in which we then transfer that through guided inquiry is consistent across every school.

I would say that different schools need to adjust in different ways so that they will be in line with the policy when we roll that out, as part of our implementation approach. They will need to be able to demonstrate the balance regarding explicit teaching and the way that that would go through to a guided inquiry, for example, in other subject areas.

THE CHAIR: Given the large disparity in outcomes between advantaged and disadvantaged children in the ACT—I understand it is the second largest in the country—we have been talking about a multi-tiered system. Are there plans in place to apply a multi-tiered system that supports or covers social and economic wellbeing, alongside literacy and numeracy? Is this in the consideration of the directorate?

Dr Moore: I can speak to the data and segue into what we are doing in the equity space. We know in the ACT that our data is pretty stable across the board. We certainly are concerned about equity; that is something that we have been measuring for a long time in the ACT. We will be doing it slightly differently with the new NAPLAN proficiency standards. That will give us a better picture regarding the gap between students who are educationally advantaged and performing really well compared to students who are less educationally advantaged. Also, we are looking at the bottom—the gap between those two groups who require additional support. We will have greater information to help us inform the targeting of supports.

In particular, under the Future of Education, there has been a big focus on equity. There are a number of initiatives that have already been rolled out. Ms Spence could probably talk to the ones around free meals in schools and the equity fund. They all go to addressing equity, trying to ensure that every student has a fair chance at doing well at school, and that some of those external barriers are addressed.

Ms Spence: Would you like me to expand on those programs? They are less to do with multi-tiered systems and support and more to do with equity investment that we make through those particular programs.

THE CHAIR: The question is whether we are looking at integrating some kind of approach for our students across whether or not a child is having, say, literacy and numeracy difficulties because of social or economic barriers, and having that be part of that comprehensive system, rather than individual programs that might tick off one box but not cover the comprehensive support that I think we are looking for.

Ms Spence: Certainly, with our equity fund, it supports access by parents to tutoring or any kind of external programs that they might want to use, to support the costs at school. We also provide to each of our schools a pot of money around equity for those young people who would like to go on an optional program; they would have access to money to help support that, and schools have the discretion to make decisions around that.

In terms of the teaching and learning, and the literacy and numeracy outcomes, with the way that we do that within schools and access to the data, it is about being really clear around what the information tells us around our vulnerable young people—for example, those that may have English as an additional language, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, and those young people that are receiving adjustments as students with a disability. We are trying to use the data to best inform where we need to invest in our schools and in our system to make sure that the right professional learning, the right supports, are there for our teachers, to implement what is best for an individual that is in front of them at a particular point in time.

Access to that information, to really target and understand what is going on in our

schools and across our system, is helping to inform decisions that we make around that investment. An example is in our inclusion strategy, and the way that we are using that information to invest in our coaches supporting our schools to implement specific things, to increase teacher confidence and capability to adjust their practice.

THE CHAIR: If we are relying on parents, it can be risky—parents who access an equity fund—because maybe it is mum, she is on her own and she has three jobs. They are the kids where this sort of intervention can be really viable, and that is driven at the teacher level or the school level rather than requiring parents to apply.

Ms Berry: Most school communities know their teachers and students really well. I understand that some parents might not be able to advocate for themselves, and our schools are really good at doing that on their behalf or assisting them to get those additional supports. That is why we have the equity fund, to start with. But the schools have always had funding to be able to support those students. It could be an excursion or a musical instrument, and the equity fund can also provide for those.

The teachers know that that funding is available in their schools, and they know those students and families really well. Our teachers are doing the best that they possibly can in those circumstances, knowing that some children and families have really complex lives. We are trying to put in the systems outside education, such as the inclusion coaches, to support teachers to do some of that other inclusive work as well.

MR HANSON: Can I ask about antisemitism in ACT schools? I refer to a recent *Canberra Times* article titled “Jolt of dread”. I will quote from the article:

She said that boys and some girls were “making comments about the Holocaust like that the Jews should have been gassed ...

She said the harassment culminated in a group of boys hunting for her daughter. “These boys were trying to find her, going from place to place, so I went to get her.”

She was told that the boys were moved to a different class, but “she doesn’t feel safe because she doesn’t feel that anyone will stand up for her.” Are you, Minister, aware of that incident?

Ms Berry: Yes. I will ask Mr Huxley to provide some information. Mr Hanson, as you know, I would prefer not to discuss specific incidents or details that can identify people, but we can talk broadly about our approach in schools.

Mr Huxley: I have read and acknowledge the privilege statement. Thanks, Mr Hanson, for the question. ACT public schools value safe and respectful behaviours. It is at the core of public education, and we value people with different religions and values in our schools. Everyone has the right to be safe at our public schools. This is something which we continue to reiterate through our Safe and Supportive Schools policy. It is something that our schools and principals are very much mindful of, especially around the ongoing discourse in relation to antisemitism and events in the Middle East in recent years.

We very much set the ongoing intent that people should be safe in respect of that school. If there are issues or concerns, the school deals with those on an individual basis. They

can reach in for support centrally from the directorate, and there are external agencies which we can also get involved in certain instances.

We reiterate those expectations with the broader school community, and it is something that we follow up with wellbeing supports for those impacted. We have school psychologists and social workers who can help in those specific circumstances with the individuals involved.

MR HANSON: Are you aware of other incidents of antisemitism?

Mr Huxley: We would be aware that there has been heightened access to social media and material on social media that is circulating at the moment. That is available to different people in the community. We probably see more just general support for different parties involved in events in the Middle East, not necessarily explicit targeting of others.

MR HANSON: Is the directorate doing anything or are schools doing anything proactively? Noting the heightened levels of tension in community debate and social media, is there any proactive action being taken to make sure that these events do not happen within schools?

Mr Huxley: We have Safe and Supportive Schools officers who work in all of our schools. That is a network of people specifically looking at the wellbeing supports in schools. They have very much been made aware of these issues. We also had communications from our deputy director-general last year, and we are looking at doing further communications at the start of this year with our Safe and Supportive Schools officers, specifically reminding them of the proactive steps and supports that are available and the external agencies that can be involved to support, if these things do occur.

MS BARRY: You talked about the Safe and Supportive Schools policy. I am anticipating that that policy would also cover racism in schools. How would that work in practice? I have received concerns from the multicultural community that most children experience racism. My daughter has also been racially profiled in school, being called “monkey” and things like that. How would that work in practice? How do you support schools to deal with these incidents?

Mr Huxley: First, I am very sorry to hear that.

MS BARRY: That is fine.

Mr Huxley: Basically, we really encourage people who have any concern to raise it directly with the school in the first instance. A lot of the things that can occur may not be visible to the staff at the school. They may occur outside school hours, on social media, in the transit to and from the school site or events on the school site itself. So we strongly encourage anyone to, please, bring any instances or concerns forward to the school. The school has proactive programs, which we run through the Safe and Supportive Schools officers. But, if individual events are occurring, the best thing to do is raise it with the school. They are geared up to respond with a range of the supports that I mentioned previously.

MS BARRY: My daughter did raise it, and there was no psychologist or social worker on the ground that day to deal with it. Teachers do the best they can with the resources they have available. I would like to know whether you capture incidents like this and have data capture to move resources across to where there is a surge or where there is more need. How do you manage those resources across schools? Some schools are better at dealing with these things than others.

Mr Huxley: I might pass to my colleague Ms Spence for this one.

MS BARRY: Thank you.

Ms Spence: All of our schools, as part of the Safe and Supportive Schools policy, have a requirement to implement systems of support, and most of our schools implement the Positive Behaviours for Learning Framework. That is a tiered approach to supporting what we would call prosocial behaviours in schools. A key part of that work is that the team actually analyses all of our incident data, they look at the incident data on a school-by-school basis and they cut it through all different areas.

One of those areas is harassment or bullying on the basis of race. They will look at that data and, when they start to see increased trends in specific datasets—be that race, something about gender-based harassment—they will provide a more targeting coaching approach with those schools, to work with them to understand the data and to implement different strategies, to proactively teach, I guess, the behaviours that are expected across the whole school setting but then also start to look at more tiered approaches—so that when they might need to do something extra, what they could do to support that. For example, in the bullying and harassment space, it could be a specific bullying program that we support that would be implemented in a specific school, because the data is telling us that that is something that might need to have extra at that particular school. The coaches work in that way across our system. Depending on the needs of the school and what the data is telling us, some schools might get more support than others.

MS BARRY: Thank you.

MR HANSON: I have a follow-up on that as well. So you have a dataset that shows you incidents of racism and, where applicable, for which racial group is being identified or being victimised? Have you got that?

Ms Spence: Our incident reporting system picks up all incidents. One of the insights that we can get from that data, when we define it down to bullying and harassment, there is a subsection that you can check a box that is “racial, bullying and harassment”. That information is available to us.

MR HANSON: Great. As a result of that, have you seen any increase more generally, in racist attacks or bullying? Secondly, does that identify against a particular group? I guess getting back to that antisemitism, have we seen that spike in antisemitism or is it consistent with where we have been over a number of years? Have you done that analysis, or has somebody?

Ms Spence: If you drill down to the racially-based incidents, bullying and harassment is only a new feature. So we do not have the ongoing trend data to be able to get that kind of insight. Also, it is individual school information; it is not correlated across the whole system, because it really is about targeting supports for individual schools, as opposed to system-wide data analysis.

THE CHAIR: Ms Spence, what was the name of the framework or approach, the prosocial—

Ms Spence: Positive Behaviours for Learning.

THE CHAIR: I think you were going to say all schools and then you caught yourself and said most schools. Do you have data on how many of the incidents are occurring in schools that are using that framework and how many are not?

Ms Spence: I do not have that data available.

THE CHAIR: Could you perhaps be able to provide a summary on notice of how many incidents of, say, racial-related harassment are occurring in the schools that are applying that approach, as opposed to those that are not—or a kind of proportion to look at whether or not the approach is working?

Ms Spence: We would not have the long-term data to be able to show that, even 12 months.

THE CHAIR: Maybe just this last year?

Ms Spence: Probably just to clarify: all of our schools are required to have systems in place to support the teaching of the prosocial behaviours as part of our policy setting. Most of our schools uptake the Positive Behaviours for Learning program. Those schools that do not implement PBL are required to still demonstrate that they are teaching explicit prosocial behaviours to support safe systems in our schools. In terms of the specific dataset, I can look into that but I am not sure that the specific data you are asking for is available. But we could have a look to see what we could make available.

THE CHAIR: That would be great, even if it is more general. It is good to know whether a specific approach is working.

MS TOUGH: Mine is another CECA question. I am interested in an overview on the development and the continued operation of CECA's Quality Engagement Program and how that is helping improve quality in the early childhood education and care sector.

Mr Moysey: Yes, thank you, Ms Tough. The Quality Engagement Program focuses on providers who have “working towards” services. In my previous answer, I talked about the capacity of providers to understand what is happening in their services and the expectation of us in the ACT and around the country in all the regulatory authorities for providers to work on their problem areas. The Quality Engagement Program is designed to work with providers who have “working towards” services and do the process with them where they have repeated assessment ratings, and we focus on providers who are

most willing to engage.

If we think about some of the common methodologies and theories around improving education performance, some of the things that we all experience are the things that we routinely do: having to respond to things that happen—and services have children and families, and there are things that happen—and leading improvement. Part of that is to assist providers—to teach them to fish, if you like—with how they use all the material that we provide them, through our assessment rating, through our audit process, through our investigations and through the general educational material that we provide; and how they can exercise that and, of course, all the material that is available nationally to understand the particular issues that they have in their services and then develop a plan to work on those. The idea is it is repeatable. We do the work with them and then the idea is that they take that and do that themselves and come back to it. Is that helpful?

MS TOUGH: That is helpful. Are there indicators that centres are more common to get “working towards” ratings than other indicators, or is it kind of spread out across the indicators?

Mr Moysey: It is a little too early to tell it. It takes time. Part of the planning with them is often the difficult question: how long do you think it would take to work on those issues? So how deep is the systemic issue for them? What is their relationship with their service directors? How are they going with getting out of the cycle of routines which are dragging away from time of leading improvement? Once the plan’s settled, the plan is for them to work on. We are looking at how we do some check-ins with them about how they are going. Essentially, it really depends on the nature and, of course, how big the provider.

MS TOUGH: Do you have the number of centres involved in the program?

Mr Moysey: Yes, I do. In the annual report year, we had four providers who have a total of 21 services. Our goal was to get to around 20 through the calendar year, last year. But, in the annual report, at the reporting time, four providers with 21 services participated.

MS TOUGH: Slightly related, does CECA cover government preschool as well as the whole early childhood sphere, regardless of provider?

Mr Moysey: Yes.

MS TOUGH: Thank you.

MISS NUTTALL: My question is about fossil fuel sponsorships in ACT schools. I am interested to know, if you collect the data, how many students in ACT schools have received awards sponsored by fossil fuel companies over the past 12 months.

Mr Matthews: Miss Nuttall, I have come a long way to the table to say no.

MISS NUTTALL: That is all good. I have a few follow-ups. In the wording of the Education Directorate Corporate Sponsorship Policy why are companies associated with fossil fuels not specifically listed as an inappropriate sponsor? The ones that are

include tobacco, alcohol, pornography and armament companies. So why not fossil fuels?

Mr Matthews: Just as a general comment, we have committed to undertaking a review of our corporate sponsorship policy this year. Obviously, you are referring to the current policy, which has been in place for some time. The general overarching way that we do the policy is to make sure that the sponsorship activity is consistent with the values and corporate purpose of the Education Directorate. The way that corporate sponsorship works is, again, as you know, mostly in very small local sponsorships between local businesses and schools—so local supermarkets et cetera.

What we wanted to do previously with the policy is just to make sure that there was some general guidance, but each decision needs to be made on its own merits. We are wanting to make sure that there is only appropriate sponsorship occurring within schools and that any sponsorship arrangement that is entered into has cancellation arrangements as well, so that we can get out of those arrangements if we do think that they are inappropriate.

MISS NUTTALL: And that will be considered as part of the review into the new policy?

Mr Matthews: In terms of the scope of what specific organisations are named, then yes. As you have pointed out, basically, it is a very broad statement in the policy. It highlights general areas where we do not think those sponsors are appropriate. Obviously, when you look at what that looks like on the ground, a school is not in a position to determine necessarily what range of activities a particular company is involved in. Normally, as I said, it is a very localised arrangement. But we want to provide that guidance and we want to make sure that any sponsorship that schools individually enter into or at a system level are appropriate and reflect our values as a public education provider.

MISS NUTTALL: Beautiful. Do you have a timeline for when we might expect that review to commence and when it might be completed?

Mr Matthews: We have not confirmed that yet, Miss Nuttall. But, as I said, we do think it is an important piece of work. I cannot nominate a timeframe right now, but we have committed to doing that in this calendar year.

MISS NUTTALL: I am thinking of the awards we had when I was in school like the BHP Billiton awards, the Rio Tinto Science Competition and things like that. Have you received feedback previously, whether that is from staff, students or parents, that there might be an issue with that?

Mr Matthews: I think it is fair to say that people have a range of opinions on this matter. Some people feel extremely strongly about it and have written to the minister or to the directorate to express those views. In general, I think that most parents see a commonsense position between supporting enrichment activities, because sponsorship is not for core activities. Obviously, all schools are fully funded by the ACT government. The types of sponsorships that are generally entered into are for individual activities and events and potentially the opportunity to attend a conference, for example, or a

particular enrichment activity.

So, in general, I think that what the community is looking for is to make sure that the types of activities that are occurring generally reflect well on public education and do not put our students or staff in a difficult position in relation to the activities of those companies. But, essentially, it is a case-by-case assessment that is undertaken mostly at the individual school level.

MISS NUTTALL: On the review, can I confirm whether companies associated with gambling would also be within the scope of companies to be considered in that sort of general guideline?

Ms Berry: I do not think the review is about specific areas. It is more an overall review of the policy direction.

MISS NUTTALL: Okay.

THE CHAIR: Will community consultation be included in that review process and will the findings be made public?

Mr Matthews: We have not finalised the methodology yet. But, yes, we are interested in what the community views are on this. It will not just be an internal review.

THE CHAIR: Okay; and findings would be publicised, in that case?

Mr Matthews: We will issue a new corporate sponsorship policy, and we will obviously provide some feedback on the community consultation process.

THE CHAIR: It might be a listening report or something like that?

Mr Matthews: Yes, something of that nature. That is our normal method.

THE CHAIR: Okay; thank you.

Ms Wood: Chair, I have some data from earlier questions to put on the record.

THE CHAIR: Sure.

Ms Wood: The last publicly published enrolment for Majura was 818 students. That is from August last year, and 82 per cent of schools were using the Positive Behaviours for Learning model specifically. Ms Spence has the data on the Muliyan referrals.

Ms Spence: On the Muliyan referrals, the intake period is twice a year, term 2 and term 4. In term 2 of 2023, 22 referrals were received for five places that were available. In term 4 of 2023, 32 referrals were received for 17 places. In term 2 of 2024, 22 referrals were received for three places.

THE CHAIR: Twenty-two for term 2 every time? Is that what you said?

Ms Spence: Yes. That is coincidence.

THE CHAIR: That is strange. It will probably be 22 this time!

MR RATTENBURY: Are you developing or do you have climate adaptation plans for our schools?

Ms Berry: Mr Rattenbury, we need another witness for that question.

MR HANSON: Just go with a yes/no on that.

Ms Berry: We will just take it on notice. There is probably a bit to talk about in that space.

MR RATTENBURY: Yes. I would be interested to understand both the physical school buildings and the air conditioning issues that we know about as part of that, but then also the broader environment of the school in terms of tree planting and the like. I am thinking comprehensively about how our schools will adapt to particularly hotter conditions in the summer months that their students are there.

Ms Berry: We did do a lot of work during COVID around passive cooling across schools—shade sails, tree plantings and the like. I will take it on notice. There is a bit to say in that space.

MR RATTENBURY: All right; thank you.

THE CHAIR: On behalf of the committee, I thank everyone for your attendance today. If you have taken any questions on notice—and did not squeeze in answers right at the end there; very well done—please provide your answers to the committee secretary within five business days of receiving the uncorrected proof *Hansard*.

I would like to thank our witnesses who assisted the committee through their experience and knowledge. We also thank Broadcasting and Hansard and the secretariat as well for their support. If a member wishes to ask questions on notice, please upload them to the parliamentary portal as soon as possible and no later than five business days from today.

The committee adjourned at 12.00 pm.