COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

Official Committee Hansard

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING

Reference: Teacher education

TUESDAY, 5 JULY 2005

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING

Tuesday, 5 July 2005

Members: Mr Hartsuyker *(Chair)*, Mr Sawford *(Deputy Chair)*, Mr Bartlett, Ms Bird, Ms Corcoran, Mr Fawcett, Mr Michael Ferguson, Mr Henry, Ms Livermore and Mrs Markus

Members in attendance: Ms Bird, Ms Corcoran, Mr Hartsuyker, Ms Livermore and Mr Sawford

Terms of reference for the inquiry:

To inquire into and report on:

The scope, suitability, organisation, resourcing and delivery of teacher training courses in Australia's public and private universities. To examine the preparedness of graduates to meet the current and future demands of teaching in Australia's schools.

Specifically, the Inquiry should:

1. Examine and assess the criteria for selecting students for teacher training courses.
2. Examine the extent to which teacher training courses can attract high quality students, including students from diverse backgrounds and experiences.
3. Examine attrition rates from teaching courses and reasons for that attrition.
4. Examine and assess the criteria for selecting and rewarding education faculty members.
5. Examine the educational philosophy underpinning the teacher training courses (including the teaching methods used, course structure and materials, and methods for assessment and evaluation) and assess the extent to which it is informed by research.
6. Examine the interaction and relationships between teacher training courses and other university faculty disciplines.
7. Examine the preparation of primary and secondary teaching graduates to:
   (i) teach literacy and numeracy;
   (ii) teach vocational education courses;
   (iii) effectively manage classrooms;
   (iv) successfully use information technology;
   (v) deal with bullying and disruptive students and dysfunctional families;
   (vi) deal with children with special needs and/or disabilities;
   (vii) achieve accreditation; and
   (viii) deal with senior staff, fellow teachers, school boards, education authorities, parents, community groups and other related government departments.
8. Examine the role and input of schools and their staff to the preparation of trainee teachers.
9. Investigate the appropriateness of the current split between primary and secondary education training.
10. Examine the construction, delivery and resourcing of ongoing professional learning for teachers already in the workforce.
11. Examine the adequacy of the funding of teacher training courses by university administrations.

The Inquiry should make reference to current research, to developments and practices from other countries as well as to the practices of other professions in preparing and training people to enter their profession.

WITNESSES

Committee met at 9.33 am

LYNCH, Dr David, Head and Subdean, Faculty of Education and Creative Arts, Central Queensland University, Noosa

SMITH, Professor Richard, Dean, Faculty of Education and Creative Arts, Central Queensland University, Noosa

CHAIR (Mr Hartsuyker)—I declare open this public hearing of the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training inquiry into teacher education. The committee has heard much about the need for stronger partnerships between teacher education institutions, education authorities and schools in developing and delivering teacher education. In this context, we welcome the opportunity to learn about Central Queensland University's Bachelor of Learning Management program. I take this opportunity to thank Professor Richard Smith and Dr David Lynch for the extensive arrangements that they have made for our visit here today. Thank you very much, gentlemen.

I welcome our first witnesses. Although the committee does not require you to give evidence under oath, I advise you that these hearings are legal proceedings of the parliament and warrant the same respect as the proceedings of the House itself. The giving of false or misleading evidence is a serious matter and may be regarded as a contempt of the parliament. Are there any corrections or amendments that you would like to make to your submission?

Dr Lynch—No.

CHAIR—I invite you to make an opening statement.

Prof. Smith—The point to start at is the Bachelor of Learning Management and why it came into being. Taking a personal perspective, after 30 years or so in teacher education across several states in Australia, and with a fair degree of international experience as well, I came to a conclusion about the model of teacher education in practice that I knew as the B.Ed model—for want of a better word; it is a kind of label rather than a specific—and the teacher education research of about 30 years and its hard findings. Putting the two things together—the practical experience and the research—I came to the conclusion that we really needed to have a program that attempted to do something different.

Why? Firstly, there is a well-known theory-practice gap in teacher education, where what is taught on campus does not always translate into the work situation. Secondly, due to the vast changes in society—postmodernism, the shift to a knowledge society and so on—we needed a different kind of teaching force to operate in, become critical of and foster the purposes of this new society. I did not think we were going to get that out of the present model. So social change and the need to rid ourselves of the theory-practice gap really drove the motivation to prepare the model. I was recruited to CQU to generate the model. On arrival at CQU I recruited David Lynch and several other people to help us create the model, where Noosa—or Pomona—was to be the cutting experimental edge of this new program that is in fact taught across five other campuses in Central Queensland. That is the genesis of the program.

The name 'Learning Management' signalled a break with the B.Ed concept. I think it is very important indeed to state that learning management had its origins not in managerialism or in economic rationalism—as some of our detractors try to say—but is a metaphor that is taken from architecture and design studies and means the artful arrangement of elements to create an intended result. In the BLM we intend to produce people who have quite superior pedagogical skills.

Dr Lynch—My background is 15 years as a state school principal and five years in academia—so I am a newcomer to it. Academia started with me at CQU Noosa. I guess the catalyst from where I sit was that in 1999 Education Queensland released its blueprint, QSE2010, which was basically about where schools needed to go in the context of a changing economy. What this meant for me as a state school principal was a realisation that, for a number of years, the graduates who were coming into my school as teachers were just not thriving. We actually had to go to great lengths to have school based induction programs to teach these guys how to survive in the classroom. QSE2010 honed the point a little bit more because it captured very snugly the notion that the world had changed and therefore we need a different kind of teacher.

I guess that is where the dovetail comes with Richard. There was a realisation that to do a program like this in the existing faculty of education was problematic because of the traditional elements—the history, if you like—so I would hone the point that CQU Noosa was a greenfield. We started from scratch. You had somebody like me who had experience in academia from the point of view of doing a doctoral program, having the notion of working in schools and having a number of key roles in Education Queensland.

One of the key elements about this program is that, with the BLM, there is also a realisation that this is no longer a university responsibility. We see teacher education as a partnership. The program that we have put together here hones that. When you talk about the BLM, CQU cannot say that they own it, nor can EQ or any other partners. It is actually a collective. I am a permanent member of CQU. Before that, I was seconded from Education Queensland. I have recently resigned from EQ and am now a permanent academic. That is primarily because I am taking up another position at another university.

CHAIR—If you were to very briefly summarise the differences in your approach from other approaches, what are the key elements that you see that you do differently?

Prof. Smith—There are a couple of them—and I am sure that David will elaborate on them. The first thing is the primacy of partnership. The classical B.Ed model—the model that I am most used to and, I must say, most of my teacher education colleagues are most used to—is an on-campus teaching program which is articulated with schools, where the schools carry out things like supervision of practise and so on but are normally not part of the decision making process. The BLM program was developed by a committee of school teachers, university staff, union members and so on, where the academics were outnumbered by people out of the profession. The essential thing is that the partners were in from the moment of conception and helped develop the model and the procedures for implementation. That is a critical point.

A second point is that there is a quite definite, decisive emphasis on pedagogy rather than curriculum. It is not an either/or thing; it is a matter of balance. The B.Ed model tends to be

about curriculum issues—selection of knowledge, the sociology of knowledge and so on. We change the balance and say that it is about the application of pedagogical strategies that achieve learning outcomes. That is a very important distinction. We have a little throwaway line. We have moved from what in the B.Ed was the acquisition of knowledge for later application. We say that we have shifted from illumination—learning the knowledge—to performativity. Our students must be able to demonstrate the conceptual knowledge that they learn on campus.

I will give you an example. I was doing some interviews at Bundaberg a couple of years ago and the students said, 'We've just done this terrific stuff on constructivism'—which is a classical position in teacher education; it is a social theory about learning—and I said, 'Show me.' They said, 'What do you mean by "show me"?' and I said, 'Well, you've learnt about constructivism; do something that demonstrates constructivism.' The comment was: 'Oh, we'll have to go back and check the books.' And I thought: 'This is the cutting edge; this is the point.' We say that if we are going to teach constructivism in the program, the students must be able to do it. That has implications.

The last point is that the knowledge base of our program is completely different to a B.Ed. With our teacher colleagues, we redefined the knowledge base. So we have essential professional knowledge as one of the domains of knowledge. We have pedagogy as another domain of knowledge. We have 'futures' as a domain of knowledge and there is another called networks and partnerships. These were defined as the essential bases for becoming a learning manager in tomorrow's society. Whereas if you take the B.Ed you would be looking at Ed.Psych, sociology of education, curriculum theory, psychology and all those sorts of things. It is not that we do not deal with those things; we do them in a transdisciplinary way and we do them inside those four domains of knowledge.

CHAIR—Is professional knowledge the actual subject knowledge?

Prof. Smith—We have a domain of knowledge called essential professional knowledge. The essential question is: what is it that people who are in learning and teaching situations really need to know? An example is: if you are learning to fly, you need to know about roll, pitch and yaw. If you do not know about those things, you die and so does everybody else around you. I know it is a trite example, but what is that equivalent to in the management of learning? I think the answer to that is that it is not the sociology of education. I have a doctorate in anthropology, and I think there is really important stuff for people to know but it is not essential for teaching and learning. What we think is essential is instructional theory—not learning theory; instructional theory—that is, how you get people into a situation where they can learn stuff. We think they need to know about designing pedagogical strategies. What do we know about pedagogy? There is 35 years of research about effective schooling. We know some stuff about pedagogy. So we are moving towards, I guess, the fundamental content of a learning science rather than a normal B.Ed program where every academic has their own thing and they teach their own thing—so you get a proliferation of bits of theory that do not necessarily translate into having a good instructional stance and so on.

CHAIR—Where does the actual knowledge that you will impart to students, such as science or maths, fit into your structure?

Prof. Smith—One of the most traditional parts of our program is what are called the key learning areas, KLAs, which are still there. This is an experimental program, in a way. Some of the hardest nuts to crack are the traditional subject areas. We have strong ideas about how that should happen, but we still teach mathematics and English—in fact, a recent review of our program pointed out that we are one of the only programs, certainly in Queensland, with a course called teaching reading. So there is stuff in that that I suppose in the old program we would have called the discipline studies. In the secondary programs people do the normal maths, English, science et cetera.

CHAIR—For one of the non-teachers on this committee, could you quickly define constructional theory for me?

Prof. Smith—Constructivism?

CHAIR—Yes.

Prof. Smith—There is a theory that goes something like this: knowledge is not out there waiting to be discovered but is constructed in the internal processes of the mind. If you take the view that people do not pick up facts and simply store them away but they construct meaning out of the experiences that they have, this leads you in one direction for pedagogical practice—teaching practice. It means a lot of activity and a lot of work with individual kids and so on. It is sometimes called the acquisition theory. It is highly individualised and it is about the internal mechanisms of the mind.

The other end of the spectrum is called transmission theory, where the assumption is that there is knowledge outside and at least part of education is concerned with picking up and assimilating knowledge that we already know—like physics, philosophy or whatever. That leads to something different; it is sometimes called the grammar school model.

Dr Lynch—There in lies part of the challenge, because you have to deliver all that to a novice, who has to be able to apply this to outcomes for students. I would make the comment that there is a starting point to all this. The starting point of these committees that we set up with academics, people from the teaching industry and people from the community were outcomes. We sat down and asked: 'What are we aiming for?' From that we developed a number of second- and third-order outcomes. These outcomes were the elements that were going to decide what knowledge we needed, what knowledge we could dispense with and, importantly, how we were going to judge that our graduates were actually what we said they were. That is an important thing.

You can distil these outcomes into two areas. One is workplace readiness, which is why the KLAs have stayed. In other words, it was very clear that there is a paradigm that exists in schools. As I principal I used to see it everyday; they would come in and they could not fit the system. So we said, 'First of all they have to be workplace ready.' The research that we have done tells us pretty strongly that we can do this in two ways. The first way is that we can put them in schools more, and they will be really workplace ready, but they will be pretty inept about operating outside of that; and the second way is to get industry to help us be workplace ready. The second one is a futures orientation, and that is where QSE2010 came in. We define that as capability to engineer an alternate teaching-learning paradigm.

Workplace readiness is the current situation. It works for some kids, and there is heaps of research out there that talks about what type of child it works for. But there are a vast number of children that drop out of the system, and it is the old industrial paradigm coming into play. Futures orientation is about engineering, bringing together all the current research about how we ensure we have learning programs that meet all learner needs. Once we did that, we got the outcomes and we decided this is workplace readiness and futures orientation, then we came to the partners. We sat down and asked, 'Who's best to deliver workplace readiness and how do we do it?' At Noosa the university campus is in a school. From a university point of view, the money that we would have to pay groundsmen et cetera for we use to fund the program in other ways. So we are in a school for workplace readiness. We then asked, 'There are a whole lot of futures orientation components; who's best to deliver those?' The school said, 'It's a bit foreign to us but we want to be part of it.' So we then started looking for different types of people to deliver those elements.

The BLM is about graduates who are workplace ready yet have a futures orientation. Going back to the outcomes, how do we know that they have achieved this? In a traditional university, you would enrol in a course or subject and you would do two theoretical papers—generally written. If you can pass those, that is great. You also have to do 80 days in a school and, if you have done that, okay. The 80 days in a school basically meant that, if you could get on with your supervisor in the school, you got the tick. In our program, there are two assignments. We call them learning tasks. The first one is generally a theoretical discussion about the key elements. The second one is a portal task. You must go into a school.

So, if a course is teaching reading, you get some theory about it and you then go into the school and get some workplace readiness components and futures orientation. But, for the second learning task, you must actually demonstrate that you can achieve learning outcomes for the class. If it is teaching reading, we define what the outcomes are, we set up a portal task and you must go and do it. So you must demonstrate the procedural knowledge and the declarative knowledge. If you cannot do, you cannot pass.

In a traditional B.Ed, if you play the game well enough as a student—do all the theoretical component, because that is the important part, and get on well in schools for 80 days—you will graduate. In our program, the partners who are here today—the guys in the schools—are the ones who actually make the judgment. There are a couple of outcomes to this. If you have a look at the employability statistics on our graduates, you see that they all get jobs—they all get snapped up—because they can do.

Going back to my earlier point: as a principal, what used to worry me was that these people would come into the school and they had no element of workplace readiness. You actually had to induct them. Then the student would say, 'I got this psychology stuff, but where does this fit in terms of doing my work?' The Bachelor of Learning Management packages this all together. We have packaged it through eight key questions—and we have tabled that document. There are eight key questions. I have a wife who is in the health profession and there are a whole lot of systems that they go through. They start with the first system and go through it. With our program, when a graduate starts in class, the first question asked is: what does my learner already know? As they go through the series of questions, they then unpack the stuff that they have been given—workplace readiness or futures orientation—to deliver outcomes. That notion of performativity is absolutely crucial.

Partnership is fundamental. If we do not have our partners, they are not going to be our quality assurance nor are they going to be providing some mechanisms. To give you a feel about it: in first year, students do two-thirds on campus and one-third in a school. By their final year, they do two-thirds in a school and one-third on campus. We define the first year as an introduction to the problematic nature of teaching and learning, the second year as explicit skill development and the final year as transition from novice to professional. We do not think that we should have five years of experimentation with kids before a teacher is competent as a teacher. If they cannot do it from day one, they will continue in their degree.

We have some ways we buffet this. It is a four-year degree. Everybody starts on a three-year compacted program. If you cannot do it, we start extending the program to four years. We did that politically because people then think, 'I am still doing it in four years, so I really have not failed as a potential teacher.' So we have the provision to extend it. The people who come into this profession or into these degrees, have a yearning for it. I would say that that is probably 75 per cent of our energy—the fact that they have already got it. So the number for whom we have to extend the program is pretty minimal, because they want to do it and they are in a school and doing it. We market our program that students are in school from day one. They actually attend a school before they attend university.

Ms BIRD—I am an English history trained secondary teacher—prior to being a lot of other things—and a graduate of the Diploma of Education at Wollongong University. That is my background and experience. I really commend some of the issues that you have picked up. I now have a son doing first-year science teaching at university and it frightens me that he was doing the old psychology of education, sociology of education and philosophy of education in the structure that I remember doing—which I actually found fascinating but completely irrelevant to teaching. It was probably most appropriate for a Bachelor of Education, which would be about understanding education in a society and a nation, but it was not particularly useful to what I think you are describing in the Bachelor of Learning Management, which would seem to be far more profession focused. So I really appreciate what you have presented to us today and I look forward to finding out even more about it.

The challenge for a federal government committee is that at a state government level you have a strong voice of the employer, a strong voice of the user of the programs—and appropriately so. From the federal level, our connection to this is the provision of the funding of universities. What I would be interested to know is what are the structural or funding barriers that you see happening with the way universities are funded and resourced under this sort of model? I appreciate the cultural barriers in some of the existing faculties and what you would have had to overcome there, but what are some of the structural and funding barriers that could make it easier for places to be more innovative if removed?

Dr Lynch—Do you want me to start?

Ms BIRD—Should I have my pen in hand?

Dr Lynch—If you have a look at it strategically, as a subdean I am responsible for delivering it. I am given a budget at my site to deliver on this program. First of all, to deliver this program, partnership becomes critical. We do not pay our teachers for every hour that a student is in the classroom because our partnership says that the student will have meaningful tasks—for

example, teaching reading. So we say, 'You will have a student one day per term and their portal task will be to teach reading. There is the understanding that an undergraduate will come in and work with you.' In a sense it is a quid pro quo. So there is no pay for that. When it comes to the assessment requirements, we define it as work experience and supervised practice. That is one of the first things we had to travel through. If we had to pay for every hour that a student was in a school, it would bankrupt us. That is the first thing.

Ms BIRD—That decision was driven by funding, not by being a preferred way of doing it, or would you argue that it has benefits in itself?

Dr Lynch—It has benefits because it is an equal yet different contribution. That is what we say in our partnership. When we first started we signed MOUs—the state department of education, our local schools and the university. We said that we would have an equal yet different contribution. As a university we then said, 'We are going to give you guys scope,' because traditionally teacher education was ours. Even to schools we would say, 'Get out of our face; it is ours.' We said that we were going to start with a blank slate—and that is another premise. We sat down as equal partners and said, 'What should be in there?' When it came to delivering we then had to say, 'How are we going to fund this?'

We have tried to be fair. When we come to a point where we are impacting kids in classrooms, meaning that the teacher is having to put more energy into the undergraduate, we start paying for that. We do it by releasing the teacher. In Education Queensland speak, every time we release a teacher it is called TRS and it costs about $350 per day. In a university they talk about tutor and lecturer rates, so we had to come to some idea about how we equated that. As to workplace readiness in futures orientation, which I mentioned before, we also take classroom teachers out of class. We release them to teach our programs on campus. So do we pay them as tutors? If we did pay them as tutors those teachers would become poor. Or do we pay them as TRS? If we pay them as TRS we are paying them more than the academics and, in some cases, at an associate professor level. There is no parity between them.

Ms CORCORAN—What is TRS?

Dr Lynch—The Teacher Relief Scheme, I think it is called. It is about $350 a day. It is an average full cost recovery on a teacher. We had these things to get through, so how did we travel through them? It was partnership. We had a roundtable when we decided this with all the key players. We came to an agreement. There were some areas we were not prepared to give on and some areas that they were not prepared to give on. But because we did it in consultation and with a blank slate we have not had any hiccups. I guess there is never enough money, but if you have a look at the CQU Noosa model, you will see that university has been very good to us because we essentially get the same amount of money as other campuses. But because we are in an operational school we coexist; we are not building buildings. We are not paying all the recurrent costs—groundsmen et cetera. We came to an arrangement. What the university has said is that they will apply that money in different areas. If we were to attempt to do the BLM program in a traditional university faculty, we could not afford it. It is just too expensive. It is a different degree. It requires a different model, a different context and a different way of doing things.

Prof. Smith—That is a pretty important point. I raised the issue right at the beginning that this is the experimental wing of the six campuses that we operate and it is this delivery model that

David is talking about that distinguishes it from Rockhampton, Mackay, Bundaberg or wherever. As a dean of the faculty, I want to raise some other issues. There is the delivery model which is quite critical. Let me just very briefly touch on four issues. There is the practice teaching component of the degrees. DEST this year has actually identified that component for teacher education programs and asked universities to account for it. That is a very welcome move because it isolates that prac teaching component.

Ms BIRD—Is this an issues round of reporting?

Prof. Smith—Yes. For us that is around $1.3 million and that goes out to schools around Central Queensland. In the past, I think it has been the practice in most universities to simply provide a budget to education faculties and you had to fund the prac teaching out of it. The same difficulty applied to nursing, but now under the special provisions for nursing and teaching the practice component has been isolated. I think that is good because it means for a dean that I know that that money is there securely—I know we have to account for it—and then the rest of the budget has to be for running the faculty. You would see the point I am trying to make here, so there has been that problem.

There is a problem with staffing in education faculties with a lot of practical components because the major ideology of university faculties is research. Staff will simply say, 'While I'm out there in schools doing supervision I'm not doing the research.' The two things are not mutually exclusive but they tend not to go together. So, supervision in schools, working with partners doing mentoring, is seen by many people not to be a career enhancing activity and that is a difficulty in education faculties and I suspect in other faculties as well.

Ms BIRD—Could you just clarify the point David touched on. That was that it would not be a particularly financially attractive option for a senior teacher to move into a university position because they would go in at the lower level.

Dr Lynch—I was a band 9 principal in Queensland on probably $90,000 a year. Without a doctorate I would properly have to start at a level B which is probably $45,000 to $50,000—the university would come to some other arrangement—but that is the general norm.

Prof. Smith—When you bring in a principal of a school at associate professor level, the immediate questions are: where is the doctorate, where is the research agenda and where are the publications? It sets up unfortunate dynamics in faculties where they have full-time academics. We have had our share of that. We now have quite a number of practising teachers who have joined us on two-year contracts. They have suspended their own super in state departments or in Cath. Ed and they are working for us for two years at agreed rates because they are interested in becoming part of the program.

The third point is the dollar per EFTSL, the effective full-time student load. That varies across universities. Our university is given a budget. We calculate how much a single student is worth and then we do our budgeting from there. We work on a three-hour class contact load to teach education courses. But in science education, for instance, or in LOTE because we teach Japanese as well, and also music because we have the conservatorium, three hours a week is not the norm. In Japanese, it is probably three or four hours a day, sometimes three or four days a week in class work to get the language to the level and you know what happens in music and so on. So those

operations become very difficult to maintain and to keep viable. We are all very good these days at running cost accounting activity costing and whatever, so you have to make special arrangements for a lot of those courses that do not fit the norm of what are probably our cheapest courses.

The fourth thing I would like to mention is accreditation procedures. We are accredited under the Board of Teacher Registration. All of the accreditation arrangements are up-front—you have to actually jump through the hoops at the beginning to get a program accredited. Our program is outcomes based and our argument is that the accreditation should be based on the outcomes that we achieve, not the front bits. The front-end accreditation procedures are exceptionally costly. When they are linked to requirements like 80 days of prac teaching during the course of a degree—or 100 days or whatever it is going to be—it puts a constraint on education budgets that more and more is becoming difficult to accommodate.

Dr Lynch—Some of it is contrary to what we are trying to achieve, too—it actually seeks to maintain the status quo.

Ms BIRD—It always seemed to me a slightly problematic situation that those teaching pedagogy did not practise it. Quite often in universities the approach was input driven rather than outcomes driven, even in a lecture hall, where you are dealing with people whom you want to go out and be 'outcomes for students' driven. Perhaps bureaucracies sometimes take the same approach, which is problematic. My only other question was: do you conduct regular feedback? Obviously, you are in a partnership with the schools where you cannot avoid that. How long has the course been running? Have you done any work with students post their graduation and so forth?

Dr Lynch—Two significant studies have been done. We had a situation where our existing B.Ed cohort and our first BLM cohort graduated at the same time, so Richard and I did a research study where we compared them. But the second study is probably the most important—it is fundamental. Brendan Nelson commissioned it from the Australian Council of Educational Research. It was conducted by Lawrence Ingvarson, who made a comprehensive study of the BLM graduates in terms of other graduates from other universities last year. The findings of that study are very significant and fairly confirming of what we promulgate, if you like. It came as no surprise to us, because as an outcomes based program we know what we expect. That is what we are judging it on. So when Lawrence said to us, 'We've discovered that your rhetoric is right,' we said, 'Uh-huh.' So there are two studies that we can draw your attention to.

That is a fundamental thing. Coming into teacher education, I found that a lot of what was delivered at university was very self-serving to the academic. Whatever their interest was tended to get a guernsey in the program somewhere or other. If they had a Piaget bent it would be in there. On the other hand, when you do it with a BLM approach you start with the outcomes—it defines what needs to be taught. From what I have seen, that is one of the significant fundamentals, because a place in the sun is not always there for everybody. That means that, when you adopt this approach, if you have been teaching those types of bodies of knowledge and they do not align with the outcomes you might find yourself no longer having a role.

So from where I sit in the sun the money has not been as significant. What has been significant is the politic that we have had to play, both internally and externally. The external is

the one that we really need to crack some codes on because people start to realise that, if you are graduating learning managers and not teachers, these guys come out with capabilities that actually start to change the situation for other people. When you start to make the impacts that I believe we are making and the research is telling us we are making, it starts to challenge a lot of other areas. Understand that, if you graduate a learning manager into a classroom, they are not geared to, 'Right, I've got grade 3;' they are geared to, 'I have 35 clients/students that I have to get over the line.' It actually permeates through the rest of the school. It is that political element—at the operational level it is okay, but when it starts influencing higher up policies we start to find ourselves in interesting times, because it means others have to change as well.

Ms LIVERMORE—I know we are focusing on the partnerships in our next session, but I am interested in how the university went about setting up those partnerships. How did you identify the schools that would be involved? Also, I was interested to know if all schools have the capacity to be involved. How is that addressed?

Dr Lynch—Where I sit, in an operational role, being politically savvy is critical. Not every school is part of this; they have to be accredited by us as partners, and that causes some contention. I get phone calls from principals saying, 'Why aren't I in?' It is because we do not accept all comers; we do not accept all supervisors. Our partners induct the people who work for us in schools. We teach them. We have certain requirements to be met. We cannot afford to put students anywhere. We have the luxury on the Sunshine Coast—this broad area has something like 5,000 classrooms and we have about 500 students—of having quite a number to choose from. But when we first started we had talks with education about which schools were working, which schools were going in a certain direction, which schools had significant problems and which schools had excellent things to showcase.

We started with about five schools and we worked with these schools to develop a program—I will put a slant on it. Schools will come to us and they realise that, by having a student in their school, they actually have a quasi member of staff. It is not about abusing these people as cheap labour; it is more about realising that these guys are bringing skills and knowledge to the school that the school benefits by. We are now finding that schools are approaching us and wanting in-service in the areas that we are teaching our students, including learning management. It is one of our growth areas in consultancies in that we find our graduates go into classrooms and they can deliver on the outcomes that we set up for them in terms of kids and classrooms. The other teachers sit back and ask: 'Why is there no noise? Why are there no behaviour problems?' They start deconstructing that and saying, 'There must be something in this learning management,' and, before long, we have set ourselves up with a consultancy and, as part of that, the schools then come on board.

To summarise, schools, as partners, must demonstrate certain outcomes to us—not us as partners but as the partnership. There is a steering committee, who will give evidence next—they are the partners, if you like. Once we have those people, they must then commit to certain professional development. For example, in the second year, which is explicit skill development, our research told us that, if we put a student into a classroom and the teacher—the supervisor—does not know the stuff that we are teaching, the research told us—it is amazing that we had to do the research to realise it—that the students would start to mimic the supervisor. In many cases, the supervisor was not what we wanted and the wheels would fall off. So, in the second year there were 85 learning managers, as we call them, and we trained them in learning

management. It has cost the partnership probably close to $100,000, just for this year alone. We have taken them off board, off-line and we have skilled them.

You will find that we are dealing not only with the future work force but also with the current work force—that is BLM. We have a master's degree—a master of learning management—which is where these people start feeding. In five years we have had nearly 150 local teachers do their master's degree in learning management—that is another public inquiry: what an MLM is. But, fundamentally, it is about aligning these people with workplace readiness and a future's orientation. Accreditation is critical.

Prof. Smith—That is a very important thing. One of the sales pitches right at the beginning with EDS—Executive Directors (Schools)—and principals of schools was this circle. The schools teaching profession was involved in setting up the degree and the kinds of knowledge areas and so on and the construction of the courses. They then became what we call part of a family. Those people then were our mentors in the schools and in doing so they had a double-barrelled effect on the schools: not only graduating new kinds of teachers into the profession but also upgrading the work force capability. That was the great promise. In our six campuses, it has probably worked most effectively here. It has worked rather less so in other campuses and we have had great success stories, but the success has not been as widespread as here. Part of the reason is that in those other places there has been a long history of the B.Ed so, 'There is this lot over here and this lot over there,' and it is very hard to bridge. No matter how often you say that teacher education is not a university problem anymore, it is an industry responsibility, people say, 'That's our work and that's their work.'

Ms LIVERMORE—So the same attempts have been made to try to get the partnerships happening at other campuses, but it has not reached this point?

Prof. Smith—From executive directors and from Cath.Ed for instance, and the independent schools. I think it is fair to say we have not been as successful in the other campuses in generating the kind of partnership that David is talking about here. There are good examples, but it is not as widespread. Part of that reason is that there was no history here of the B.Ed model.

Dr Lynch—Also, Richard, I would be so bold as to say that I think you, as the dean, in a sense, are very strategic in picking the capabilities here at Noosa to make the job, whereas at the other campus you had to deal with the people who were expert in the old paradigm, with respect to those people. The people who work at CQU Noosa, as a case in point, were brought on because they had specific capabilities that we needed and that they were expert in. At the other campuses, because of industrial issues we had to actually go with what we had.

With all due respect to these people, if we have a look at where they started from to where they are now, it is probably more about catch up. They are obviously along that continuum but I would argue they are nowhere near where we are because we are looking for different capabilities. At CQU Noosa, I am not employing lecturers in education. That might be what they are called but they are not lecturers in education; they are actually learning managers.

Ms CORCORAN—You may have already given this information in the papers you have given us today, but obviously we have not had a chance to read those papers yet. Just for a bit of scene setting, how long have you been going? Is this all CQU Noosa does or are there other

things as well at the university? How many students go through your program compared with teacher training or teacher education around the rest of the state? I would like to know that sort of nuts and bolts stuff.

Dr Lynch—That is a really good question. At CQU Noosa, we fundamentally deliver teacher education. We have about 500 undergraduate and postgraduate students—masters and doctoral students—in education. We also set up nursing in partnership with the University of the Sunshine Coast. Let me know if I get too out of line here, Professor. We were setting up this nursing program to be a BLM because nurses were saying the same thing about the theory-practice divide so we started with a BLM approach to nursing. We did this in partnership with Noosa Shire Council this time. So we deliver nursing. We have about 300 bodies.

We also have creative enterprise. These all have BLM flavours. When you talk learning management, it is actually a construct about working as a knowledge worker specifically with education and specifically with nursing. So that was what CQU Noosa was about. It was about positioning Central Queensland University to tackle the knowledge areas and to have a new type of nursing degree, a new type of creative enterprise degree and a new type of teaching degree. But then we fell foul of politics. If you have another university on the Sunshine Coast that has a view of the world that we should build sandstone buildings and win architectural awards et cetera and you actually start taking places from these guys, what happens is that the powers that be come and say: 'Hang on. Do nursing and get the numbers happening here,' or, with regard to creative enterprise, 'Do not take too many numbers'. So the question is the impact that this has had.

At Noosa, we were able to make a difference because, for probably a good part of the two years we did it, we did not tell anybody. We just did it. We did not tell the media, we did not tell anybody because, being politically savvy as the partners are, we said: 'Hang on a minute. We're going to get thumped if we can't deliver'. So we just did it for three years. I get phone calls from local media saying: 'This is the best kept secret on the Sunshine Coast. Tell us about it.' We would say: 'There's not much to tell. Interview the graduates.'

The point I want to make is this: CQU Noosa and the model that we have put together is the community's way. The education sector, the various providers and also the community in the broad sense of the consumers are actually demanding different types of graduates in different types of areas. CQU Noosa is the greenfield to be able make this happen. The frustration occurs when you start doing these things on a larger scale. We have got 800 students now. That is pretty significant when you have got another major university that has 3,000 students. When we first started we had 50 students. Who cares about 50 students? But when you start to grow significantly and when for every four applicants that we get for our teacher education place they get one—or maybe even a half for every four that we get—it starts to set up some political situations. So what we take is not really the question. It is more about what we are allowed to take.

We could probably grow here, and we are not just attracting local people to our BLM. The people who want to be teachers are very savvy. We have people who have come from a very broad area to Noosa—not most of them but people will gravitate because they look at the job outcomes and they look at the type of program we have. But the big 'P' politics is the one we are really dealing with. To answer your question: we have got teaching, nursing in partnership with

the University of the Sunshine Coast, which is a really smart move—that is the way I think universities should be working—as they have got some elements that they can bring to it, and we have got creative enterprise.

Ms CORCORAN—My next question is: how do you choose your students? You have all these applicants—

Dr Lynch—QTER. Our hands are tied.

Ms CORCORAN—So it is simply on the score coming out of year 12 and the ENTER scores. I do not know how long you have had graduates actually out in schools.

Dr Lynch—It is the second year.

Ms CORCORAN—You talked about them coming out and going into schools with very difficult attitudes to teaching. What happens to those teachers in the staff room?

Dr Lynch—You are going to be interviewing them, so you can ask those questions then.

Ms CORCORAN—Okay.

Prof. Smith—You asked about numbers. At the moment the faculty has 2,200 effective full-time student units involved. That figure is down from a couple of years ago, when it was about 2,600. We are talking a fair volume here. For the first year of the program each of the six campuses had a full load.

Ms CORCORAN—How does that relate to the 800 you were talking about a little earlier?

Dr Lynch—We have also got Noosa's, which is about 300.

Ms CORCORAN—So 800 teacher education—

Dr Lynch—The effective full-time students number here is about 350. Because they compact the program they are worth more, so they are probably worth about 500 warm bodies. So there are about 500 warm bodies which are worth about 340-odd EFTSL, which is how much we get funded on. So if you work on 340 we are talking university language.

Ms CORCORAN—And these are teacher education students?

Dr Lynch—Yes, they are teacher education students.

Prof. Smith—It is shared with the University of the Sunshine Coast, and it operates somewhere else. The other thing that is probably important is that Noosa's is now around about the same size as Mackay's, so we have those two programs operating in this part of the world.

Ms BIRD—I would like to follow up two issues that Ann raised. It appears to me, and I would be interested in your observations as much as you are able to offer to comment, that we moved

away from a teachers college model because we wanted to professionalise it, so we took it into universities but now people are saying, 'That's okay but it's actually not providing what we lost to some extent given the realities of the classroom and the challenges.' I think teachers colleges were set up to deliver for a particular world at that time, so I am not saying that they would be appropriate now. But it seems to me that you have found something that is relatively innovative in terms of dealing with the world as it is now.

It strikes me that young people have no trouble accessing knowledge these days and have so many sources of knowledge. When I did teacher training it was unimaginable that students really did need assistance in working their way through knowledge and applying knowledge, rather than actually being given knowledge, so I think a new model is good. I would be interested to know whether you cop some problematic issues as to supposedly trying to take us back to the teachers college days and deprofessionalising and so forth.

Prof. Smith—That is an excellent question, because that has been a criticism. The criticism is: if you operate out of a school in a place like Noosa, where is the university experience? I think there are a couple of responses to that. One is that the student composition has actually changed. Most of the students who come into the BLM are mature age. I think the little throwaway formula is that 'around 35 and female' is the normal input. These are students that the market in the past—universities in the past—have overshot or undershot; they did not figure in the equation. But they are being attracted to our program, particularly the one here.

Another important element for a regional university like ours is that regional towns like Emerald and Mackay have difficulty in recruiting people from the professions. So if we can recruit local people who are prepared locally and work in local schools, we are actually contributing a service which was not there before.

The third thing is something which I think you have just touched on. The *Four Corners* program the other night had that cheap shot at the small library—big deal! We subscribe to literally hundreds of thousands of electronic resources which every student and every staff member has at their fingertips. A lot of it is in wireless form.

The resources of a university are now widely distributed. We know that now about a program like Noosa. People can have the same kind of university experience. They have a lot of visitations and they join in university life. The university structures come here and people can visit the place. We think it is a furphy and we think it is probably the forerunner of a model that perhaps will become more important with continuing education.

Dr Lynch—I go back to your point about teachers college. We are in a school for two reasons. The first is that we do different things in them. The second thing is that in running this campus for five years I have noticed that because we have not gone and bought the block of dirt and built the buildings I am not constrained. I can see that in the next five years arrangements like that will allow us to be as light-footed as possible—to change with our population. That is what we are there for fundamentally. It is not about a cheap ride. The university still commits the same amount of money. It means that if we have to change our program—there are always new bodies of knowledge coming on board—we have the opportunity to do that fairly quickly and without having to sell the landscape, so to speak. That is probably a better way of putting it.

Ms BIRD—You have touched on my second question. I am interested in the rates of mature entry. You mentioned that there is a demographic of 35 female. Can you give us some feedback on those people who are being attracted to it? It is of interest to our committee that there are so few opportunities. I taught at TAFE for six years in a secretarial school with some of the best teachers I have ever seen. They started out as secretaries and then added education to their lives and so forth. They were fabulous teachers. Is that the sort of life experience you are talking about that some of those students come from, broadly?

Prof. Smith—They tend to be people in family situations who are looking to get back into the work force. Mentioning the voc ed area, we have a very strong pathway now for what we call 'tradies', particularly for people in areas like Gladstone and so on who for one reason or another need to find another way of earning an income. We take those people through a series of steps and they can graduate as teachers. There is also a program in our university called STEPS, which takes people in with basically no education. Just recently we had one of those graduate in medicine at the University of Melbourne, I think it was. In a regional area those kinds of pathways through to programs that people can use locally are important and I think CQU has made a priority of that. The BLM is one of those programs. On the other hand, there are a lot of school leavers who have come in.

Ms BIRD—Do you have a rough idea of what the mix is?

Dr Lynch—It is 25 per cent school leavers and 75 per cent mature age.

Ms BIRD—That is quite large.

Prof. Smith—I think there is an issue here with entry qualifications as well. That is one of the criticisms of this campus. Because it is so popular and so difficult to get into, the entry qualifications get down to about five in Queensland. That puts us in the same league as law and physiotherapy.

Ms BIRD—That is driven by demand.

Dr Lynch—Yes, it is demand driven.

Prof. Smith—That is unprecedented in a teacher education program. Most regional campuses in Queensland are far beyond that.

Dr Lynch—We have done some internal studies to have a look at who performs. Those with a smaller OP perform a lot better than those with a large OP, so it does give some indication. The other thing that I have noticed about the BLM is the significant attrition rate. It is something we have to deal with because it costs us money. If you are in an environment like the BLM where you have to demonstrate that you can do it, attrition is a natural thing.

Ms BIRD—Does it taper off through the years? Is first year significant?

Dr Lynch—There is a big drop-out in first year.

Ms BIRD—That is less worrying than if it were continuing through.

Dr Lynch—Yes. We try to engineer it that way. Having been through five years we now realise that we need to do it earlier on. We set them up in first year with some fairly significant tasks—nothing they are not prepared for—so that they can see that it may not be for them. Some of the feedback we get from students—and this is not trite; this is actual—is that they did not realise schools were like this today. That is a big disincentive. We get them into schools in first year. In some university programs you are not in schools until third or fourth year. They realise that it is not for them.

Mr SAWFORD—This is probably more of a comment than a question. It is interesting that there is such a positive attitude in what you both say. There is an analytical plan to what you both say and there is so much commonsense in what you both say. I come from a school system where the reverse happened. As a group of principals we refused to deal with some teacher education because it would not fit in with what we wanted to do and what we thought was proper. So I like the taking control attitude, because I think that needs to occur. But are there schools that you would like to get into but you cannot? Does it happen in reverse?

Dr Lynch—No.

Prof. Smith—Not yet.

Dr Lynch—In my area, no. As part of our partnership we have only Education Queensland schools. When we first started, that was probably an incentive for Education Queensland, meaning that they had just started QSE2010 and they needed to give it some momentum. Our saying 'we will only deal with EQ schools' was a benefit. But we are now finding that our market, our students, are saying, 'Well, I don't want to work for them; I want to work for the Lutherans.' I have fielded some calls from principals of private schools saying, 'Why aren't we in it?' So, starting next year, our partnership will be expanded to include our independent schools. So no, we have not had that problem. At the other campuses—Richard?

Prof. Smith—The model works. You would recognise the model on all the other campuses. In some schools it works perfectly; in other schools there are some problems. I think in Rockhampton, where I come from, we have a good relationship with the people in Cath Ed and the independents and so on. At the level of individual teachers, though, we still have some work to do to bring them into the family, as it were. We still have that old syndrome: 'Forget all that junk you're learning at the university; this is the way it is.'

Let me just emphasise that BLM takes a line on pedagogy. It is not just a free-for-all. One of the things that the education research indicates is that there is proliferation of pedagogical approaches in the school. I put it this way: if there are 80,000 teachers in Queensland, we have two to the power of 80,000 teaching styles happening in schools, and probably each teacher has two or three preferences, so you can multiply that by three. And then we wonder why young Jennifer has a bad time in year 3 in reading, goes into year 4 and has a bad time in maths and then has three good years in social science—you see the point I am trying to make. 'Learning management' has a particular technical meaning. It has an underpinning which we have borrowed from dimensions of learning about how teaching strategies are set up, and we want our teaching partners to be in the family so that we are all talking the same language and pushing the same line, as it were.

We realise that as people become professional and experienced they will make their own choices, but we want to absolutely—David uses that word that makes me nervous—guarantee that our graduates actually are experts when they leave the place and go into the schools. So as for whether there are any schools we would like to be in, there are some schools where we would like more people to be on our side. The model is still working at making that happen.

Dr Lynch—I will pick up the point about 'guarantee'. It is something that I think about in this modern world, because there are far too many kids falling through the cracks—if we as a profession and as partners do not stand up and say, 'Look, we can guarantee that our graduates can deliver outcomes.' It is exactly the same as me going to see a doctor in that I would like to have some guarantee these guys know what they are on about. I cannot see why teacher education is any different. And, if we cannot guarantee our product, we should not be in the business. That is the guarantee, and we can demonstrate it. Industry signs off and says, 'Yes, we see them doing it and they're delivering it.' Show us the evidence? Here it is.

Prof. Smith—I contemplated this as I sat in an aeroplane in Singapore on take-off one evening. As we turned to go down the strip, I thought about some child in year 3 who did not know how to read, and wondered, 'What would this teacher, this teacher or this teacher do to address this reading problem?' As we straightened up, I was thinking, 'I hope like hell this guy knows what step 1 is, and maybe plan B if something goes wrong'! Again, it is a stretched analogy.

What we have in mind is that we have to produce learning managers who have a learning science where they share language and can talk to each other and that there have to be some shared procedures so that the profession of teaching looks standardised like a lot of other professions. At the moment we suspect that teaching is a sort of preprofessional occupation where people make it up subjectively. That is great, and where it works it works exceptionally well—I had a lot of those teachers and I am thankful for that—but as a profession we need to have a much more standardised product.

Mr SAWFORD—There is a lot of angst in a lot of the submissions we have been given. You have talked about the politics of what is going on. Part of the angst is expressed in this way: 'We have had 25 bloody inquiries in the last 25 years and none of them have been implemented. This is another damn inquiry. What the hell are you doing it for? You are just wasting our time.' But I see that in a different way. This is the first House of Representatives inquiry into this matter. Maybe that is a good thing in the sense that, if all these other inquiries have been done and so much has never been implemented, there is a very good reason why. When we were in Melbourne we heard evidence from people from Victoria University and they expressed the same sort of enthusiasm and language that you two use.

CHAIR—And partnerships.

Mr SAWFORD—Yes—the same thing. Things are explained in a different way and there is a different modus operandi, whereas a lot of the other groups that are coming to us are angry. They are angry that there is an inquiry, angry that they are being made accountable, and so angry that they are perhaps using a word processor to the absolute extreme—you cannot even make sense of what they are writing. You have mentioned the politics in all of this. I am sorry I missed the

first part of your evidence, but I got the impression that you have been through a few battles with your own colleagues.

Dr Lynch—Huge battles. I used to be about 30 stone—look at me now! At Noosa my team has been largely insulated because we are hand-picked to do a specific job; it is more when we come together as a faculty. In the different committees that we are involved with is where we get to see it. I would explain it this way: you can become very expert and very comfortable in that expertise. In the last 10 years the world has become fundamentally different. If you have spent 20 years, as a number of academics have, becoming very expert in a field you are going to want to defend that position to the Nth degree, because you know that your place in the sun in the world might not be there. So some of that angst you can equate to being some fear as well.

I think inquiries like this are well and truly long overdue. I will feel extreme angst if you have this inquiry and then nothing comes from it. We have given you some messages and we have some research to back up what we are saying. We have some partners here that will probably tell you about how they see things. The angst will be felt by me if we do not make an impact. The angst comes from the fact that in a career in education there are too many kids that fall through the cracks—far too many. It is quite criminal. That is where my angst will come from because I am focused on the realisation that we are here, if you like, for the next generation. We cannot afford to miss that point. As we continue in this society with technological innovations the difficulties that children who do not get an education will face will become more pronounced. Bring on the inquiry.

Ms BIRD—I want to place a brief observation on the record. I appreciate what you are presenting, because, after reading all the submissions, one of my fears is that there is always another driving issue. I want to add working with kids with behavioural problems and working with kids from impoverished backgrounds to the curricula of universities. They are all absolutely legitimate problems that schools are dealing with. But if you do an integrated, proper course about dealing with the individual needs of learners then you deal with all that.

Dr Lynch—Exactly.

Ms BIRD—I find it inspiring that you can offer a three-year program that will hopefully address all those problems. We are looking at four-year programs and being told we need another year to add all this other stuff.

Dr Lynch—We would like to offer it for two years to some people, but we have a board in Queensland that says: 'No, three years is the bare minimum. They couldn't do it in under three.'

Prof. Smith—I chair Minister Anna Bligh's Ministerial Advisory Committee for Educational Renewal and we have just written advice to her on behaviour management. Basically, the major piece of advice, apart from setting a code of behaviour in schools, was to look out for the management of learning. The management of learning includes dealing with children who have difficulties. Behaviour management has become a catch-all. Every conceivable difficulty in the school can now be defined as behaviour management.

Dr Lynch—That is incremental change. We are talking about wholesale reform—

Ms BIRD—Yes, exactly.

Dr Lynch—not tinkering at the edges. That just creates complexity. That is what teachers complain about: the overcrowded curriculum, because we keep adding to it. We need fundamental reform.

Prof. Smith—But you are thinking about the angst and how we can get on with it. Back in 2000 when I was recruited, the then dean made a decision, saying, 'We've seen all that angst and we've seen all the research and so on, so let's just do it.' I have to say it was exceptionally difficult in the university context, with academic boards and so on. We had our moments with the accreditation authority and we have needed to work very hard to gain credibility in the community and with teachers. So it has not been easy. And there is huge inertia. I wrote somewhere a couple of years ago that waves of change have gone across schools. Schools have changed quite dramatically in the last 20 years or so, but teacher education has somehow sat in the middle and been untouched by those waves of change.

Ms BIRD—It's not a lighthouse!

Prof. Smith—Yes, and a program like this can disappear overnight simply through a change of personnel or government policy.

Dr Lynch—Particularly if we are not allowed to take an in-depth look because of politics.

Mr SAWFORD—We are at the very beginning of this inquiry and I think, as Luke and I and other members here start to receive submissions, it is probably going to take longer than we anticipated. We would hope that maybe three-quarters of the way down the path of this inquiry we could come back and talk to you again about some of the findings we have made Australia wide, possibly supported by the international research. Then we have a little checking mechanism with people like you, people from Victoria University and other people who are moving forward to the world that we are going to live in rather than one that has gone.

Dr Lynch—That would also be interesting, Rod, because I am to take up a new appointment. Another university has decided for all the reasons that I think are good that they need to go this way, so I will be able to give you a perspective on how things pan out in that environment.

Mr SAWFORD—Where is that going to be?

Dr Lynch—Charles Darwin.

Mr SAWFORD—Congratulations.

Prof. Smith—Please have a look at the ACER report. I know it has not been released yet—Minister Nelson has to release it—but I have to say I read that entire report in one breath, waiting to see what was on the next page. I think that is a very encouraging report.

CHAIR—Thank you, gentlemen.

Proceedings suspended from 10.43 am to 11.06 am

BRENNAN, Councillor Lewis (Lew), Chair, Education Working Party, Noosa Shire Council; Central Queensland University, Noosa

McALPINE, Mr Robin, Executive Director, Schools, Nambour Education District, Education Queensland; Central Queensland University, Noosa

TURNER, Mr David, Chair, Central Queensland University Noosa Steering Committee, and Principal, Kenilworth State School, Education Queensland; Central Queensland University, Noosa

CHAIR—Do you have any comments to make on the capacity in which you appear before the committee?

Mr McAlpine—I am Executive Director, Schools, Sunshine Coast South. I was previously Executive Director, Schools, for the Nambour district.

CHAIR—I now invite you to make some introductory remarks.

Mr McAlpine—In terms of partnership, there are a couple of issues that I would raise that are critical to expanding on this notion to other parts of Australia and other institutions. The first comment I would make is that this partnership has not been able to be mandated from the centre or by any one institution. It is a partnership that has been developed out of a set of relationships at a local level. The concept of the federal legislator being able to say, 'We are going to use this approach,' is going to be difficult to construct. As I analyse and unpack why this partnership has worked, it is about the sets of relationships that have been able to be generated at a local level. It has not been mandated by the centre, but it has been encouraged by each of the institutions.

From an Education Queensland perspective, and in the Nambour district, it was critical because of our work force capability and our work force statistics. The average age of our teachers in the district is 48 years. We have a deliberate strategy of employing as many graduates as we can each year, retaining them for two years and then asking them to do country service. That is a deliberate strategy to build the work force capability of our existing schools and to add balance to our work force in our schools.

The other comment that I would share is that the partnership has come from a different paradigm. The traditional paradigm that I have been used to is: this is your business; this is my business, and if you get it wrong I will blame you. This is not about that paradigm at all. This is about a paradigm that says: teacher education is our business, and we are in a partnership in that construct. The notion that schools do not have a role in teacher education is fundamentally challenged in this partnership so that our schools, and our principals as leaders particularly, see themselves as having a role in developing the work force that they need to deliver on QSE2010. They see that they have a role to build their work force capability through this program and through a range of other programs.

The commitment of schools to the partnership is a very serious one. It is intense and it does have costs for schools. It has a greater demand on a school than the traditional student-teacher

practicum approach. It is more work but schools see the benefits from it for the partnership. It is a very different relationship and a very different definition of what schooling is.

The other aspect of partnerships that is critical here is that the partners can influence in ways that cannot occur in a linear bureaucracy. From Education Queensland's point of view I have been able to ask the university to ensure that there are certain dimensions of the program that might be of importance to us as a partner that the university may not see as being as important—or may not be according priority to—that we can accord leverage to and ask the university to attend to. Within the university structure that is not possible. I am not sure if I need to clarify that. If the university is saying, 'We won't offer this particular component or this program' or 'We will cut here' or 'We will not accord priority to the Masters of Learning Management program' then, as part of a partnership, the relationship is such that we can ask the university to attend to that, whereas within the university bureaucracy that same partnership leverage is not possible.

The other aspect of the partnership that is very important from Education Queensland's perspective is that it has opened up the possibility of a career pathway for our paraprofessional work force. I can now go to a school of 14 students—that is Jimna State School which has basically one teacher in a forestry location—that has an admin officer who is enrolled in and has completed the second year of this program. That pathway would not have been possible without the way in which this program has been constructed. Living in that small, very isolated community that person has been able to maintain part-time work as an admin officer, to complete full-time study as an undergraduate student and contribute significantly to the learning outcomes of that school by being there as an undergraduate student. There are tremendous benefits for us through that partnership. It adds significantly to the work force that is available to us and it certainly adds a dimension of learning to our existing work force.

One of the critical parts of the partnership is that it ensures that our learning managers in schools who are working with undergraduates are right on the mark with the notions of their pedagogy, their current understanding of where the research is at, so that they can actually interact and mesh with the students. I have been in the classrooms of some experienced teachers who have said to me, 'I have had to lift my game. I have actually had to go home and do my reading. I have actually had to make sure that I am on the money because I now have this young person who is coming to me and saying, "What about this? This is the current research, the theory, that I am going to be asked to demonstrate in this classroom about how I teach reading," and I have got to make sure that I am right on that as well.' So the benefits for us in our work force are also most significant.

Mr Turner—I work for the same organisation as Rob so I probably do not have too much more to add apart from a couple of points I would like to pick up on. The cost of the partnership is at times an impost on schools and it does require schools to work a little differently. My involvement is at Kenilworth State Community College which is a teaching school for the program—one of the accredited teaching schools on the coast. Certainly there is an element of giving back to the profession, but within that there is an aspect of the graduates that we were seeing in schools: work still had to be done with a lot of those graduates such as getting them organised to work in schools. They did not have the capabilities to come in and pick up the ball and go from day one.

Ms BIRD—Being an interstater, can you explain to me what a college is? I am not with you as to what you are teaching.

Mr Turner—Kenilworth State Community College is a preschool to year 10 campus. It spans primary and secondary education. There is also an element of capability that it builds within school, and Rob touched on that. Teachers are saying that once they are engaged in this new professional community that has been established they are talking to BLM students about what the research is saying and the learning management questions. They are bringing a whole new paradigm to the classrooms in my school. It engages teachers in conversations that they otherwise would not be engaged in. So there is a building of capability within the current work force as a flow-on effect to the partnership. Sometimes that is challenging; sometimes it ruffles some feathers. But by and large from my point of view it has been a very healthy thing. There is the old adage that teaching is the second most private act in the world. You go into the classroom, shut the door and do what you do. You can do that for your whole career. The BLM requires people to do it differently.

The other thing it has done for Kenilworth State Community College is that we have engaged in some pilot programs around pedagogy through the partnership with the university. This is a point I would like to stress: in the profession in the last couple of decades there is a growing amount of research that shows us that the key element in bringing outcomes for students is what the teacher does. It is the work of the teacher. For a long time we focused on content and curriculum and used other types of solutions to problems, based on a model that has perhaps seen its day in a way, when we think of the industrial model we have in our schools of time-on bells, rolling through classes and all that sort of thing.

The key thing about the BLM and the conversations that have been constructed in my school because of our involvement in that are around teaching. We know that a good teacher will produce outcomes for students no matter what their socioeconomic background or their cultural background. If people have the skills set needed to teach they will perform in the various contexts. That is fundamental to why Kenilworth State Community College has been involved—it puts the focus on the act of teaching, not of instruction.

Councillor Brennan—I think I come from a slightly different position from that of everybody else who will come before you in that I am not from the education industry. I am struggling to see that I fit within the terms of reference that are provided here, so I am very appreciative of the opportunity to sit before the committee and have a talk about what is happening here locally from my perspective and the importance of it, and the importance of embracing this and supporting it at the federal and state government levels. I think the crew understate the significance of what is happening here. Although we can hear the passion, they have been very fair and reasonable in not describing a lot of the anguish that has been a part of the go-forward here. I think it is partly my job to explain some of that.

I will give you a brief background as to how I got to where I am with the team. I was elected in 1997 and did some research on what we could do to make some positive changes here. I saw that as my role in council, understanding that we had a very fragile economy and quite a number of social issues sitting behind the wonderful facade here that is Noosa. In that investigation I came across the unchallengeable evidence that higher education is a significant part of any community's go-forward and started to look at ways of developing that. I approached the local

university, the University of the Sunshine Coast, and asked them to embrace Noosa physically and let it become part of their faculty by rolling out some of their curriculum here locally. Over a five-year period I struggled to get that support. As deputy mayor I was lucky enough to have Peter Bradford and David Lynch walk into my office and offer something that I could not refuse, and that was that they provide a higher education opportunity in the shire of Noosa, and away we went.

In the meantime, I was able to convince Noosa council that local government had a role to play in the delivery of higher education whereas previously it was considered clearly a state and federal government issue, and that is fair and reasonable to a degree. Along the way, at Noosa council we set up the working group on higher education so that we could formalise some of those strategies. Another vital part of the partnership that has been spoken of here was the formation of the youth commitment partnership which has played an integral part in the bottom-up growth of higher education in the region. The youth commitment partnership is one of six national programs that is supported by Brendan Nelson's office and has been supported as well from the Dusseldorp Foundation which sprang out of the Lend Lease organisation. In amongst all of that we have progressed to where we are, which I think is a tremendous success for all the vision and hard work that has been put in by these people.

However, I would like to identify some of the challenges along the way and some of the challenges that are in front of us at the moment. It seems that, although both the federal government and the state government are talking very clearly about education reform, we are reforming, it has been recognised that we are reforming well and the minister has spoken openly in public about the success of this program, there does not seem to be as much support for strengthening the program locally or, even worse, the growth of the program here. I would like to impress upon the committee the importance of the federal government and the state government backing up their commitment to reform. It seems, within education politics at the higher level, that there is a resistance for some reason or other. Having read the MCEETYA protocols of 2000 it is clear that the federal government funds the roll-out of higher education but it is the role of the states and territories, under the national protocols, to deliver the expansion and the maintenance of higher education. I have spoken with the director-general, Ken Smith, the director and adviser to the minister, Ian Hawke, and the minister, Anna Bligh, in the past on issues in regard to the importance and significance—in an economic and social capital raising sense—of growing the program that is here, alive, well and innovative. It seems that they are reluctant to come forward with any commitment now. We are all sitting on our hands waiting for some advice as to the future of the program in the Noosa Shire.

To reinforce the commitment of Noosa council, we have now seen higher education embedded into our policies. It is embedded into our vision that education is a part of the future of Noosa, into our social policy and into our policy for economic strategies and innovations. Noosa council being a very small council in a very small area and limited in its opportunities for economic growth is absolutely committed to what is happening here with Central Queensland University at the Noosa hub and to higher education itself in a broader sense. I could not overestimate the importance of the ability for us to work with innovative programs of higher education and to see opportunities for our young people, opportunities for foreign students to come here, and opportunities for educators to be established here and to work here just as they do in other regions in Queensland. It seems to me that the politicians of the day are struggling with what is before them in a decision-making process.

CHAIR—David, when you receive BLM students in your school, how do they present as compared to a student from a conventional environment? What traits to you see that they carry to the classroom that better prepares them for the work force?

Mr Turner—There are two elements to that. I think the first thing that stands out, something we have already touched on, is the profile of the BLM students here at CQU Noosa. By and large they bring other life experiences; they are not school leavers who are coming straight back into a school setting. That brings a richness to the school. The other thing that stands out is the portal task that David Lynch was talking about in terms of what they need to do in our school to demonstrate that they can put theory into practice, which builds a capability in itself. They have to be prepared to get in and actually do it and show that they can do it. So they probably have a more can-do type attitude. They come in and get on with the job; these are the tasks that they have to demonstrate, these are the skill sets they need to build and they get in and do that.

The portal tasks also are an asset to the school. I have said that on the one hand there is a cost in terms of having BLM students in the school but they also bring a capability. I know this is probably touching on what we are going to visit a little bit later today but we have a set of first-year students there at the moment. I have 12 first-year students working at Kenilworth. They are engaged in a program of working with students one on one in reading. So I have essentially 12 BLM students working with 24 of my students in the school who need one-on-one support in the area of reading. It is an asset—a human resource—that I otherwise would not have. During every visit over the next 10 weeks, those 12 BLM students will offer support to my students in class.

In demonstrating that they can work towards building networks and partnerships, they have to organise a community event in first semester. An example would be the under-eights day. So I had again that human resource, a body of students, working at putting on an under-eights day, which is quite a significant event. The rural fire brigade and a whole range of people coming into the school had to be facilitated and organised. It was a fantastic day that otherwise my staff probably would not have been able to achieve at the same level.

Mr SAWFORD—I have a question to each of you. Robin, I was thinking when David and Richard were talking and when you were making your introductory comments that when you scrape away all the layers, all the verbiage, from education you probably come back to some phrases like: education is the impact of mind on mind. It is just a commonsense thing, isn't it, in terms of relationships? How could you satisfactorily build a teacher education course if you did not have a relationship which is mind on mind? I do not think that is a new thing. Maybe the question needs to be asked: did we lose that in the last generation—in the last 25 years? If we did lose it, why did we lose it and how do we get it back? Isn't what David and Richard are saying the rock foundation of any teacher education course? Well, hang on a minute; I come from a school that says, 'Teaching's not necessarily rocket science.' You need to have a commonsense sort of attitude. I got the feeling you were saying that from the education department point of view this works because it works at a local level. I do not disagree with that but, if you have the right attitude to what education is and what learning ought to be, it is not such a surprise, is it?

Mr McAlpine—No, it is not. You cannot pick this model up and say, 'We are going to put this model in location B.' That is my hypothesis. I agree with you wholeheartedly about the

relationship and the mind but, fundamentally, the teacher-student relationship is critical. If we are focusing on student learning outcomes, that teacher-student relationship is the fundamental difference. We can invest a lot of money into resource packages, the syllabus and curriculum materials—basically in the knowledge that it is available. We cannot manage that.

Mr SAWFORD—I understand that. What would you do?

Mr McAlpine—I would invest more in our work force in terms of creating that teacher-student relationship. That, I think, is a very important piece of this work. The learning management approach is about developing that relationship with the learner and recognising that this is not just about having 25 year 3 students. I need an individualised learning program, and the work that I can do with those students on the way through is fundamentally based on my knowledge and understanding of those students. What is the background of the student? What happened last night at home? All of those social questions and family questions are critical to student learning. It is about knowing, listening and asking questions. If we have a cohort of teachers in our schools who are in tune with that, it eliminates a lot of the other issues that we are trying to deal with in student-teacher relationships.

Mr SAWFORD—I talked earlier about there being a lot of angst in a lot of the submissions we have been given. One of the refreshing things about reading this and reading the stuff from Victoria University is that it does not have any of that angst.

Mr McAlpine—No.

Mr SAWFORD—It has a plan and it also looks at a question which a lot of people objected to us asking. There is a philosophy underpinning all of this and it is identifiable. So it makes the comments from other teacher education institutions seem a little strange. Perhaps we will get to know about those tomorrow. I have one last question. In terms of the employing authority—the trilogy part of the relationship—should they be playing a different role? What role are they actually playing?

Mr McAlpine—There are two answers to that question. The formal approach to employing teachers by Education Queensland is that we conduct an interview at the end of their training or undergraduate studies, and they receive a rating: A, B, C. We then go to the top of that rating: S1. We say, 'As a state authority, we'll take that cohort of teachers first for Queensland.' But many of our student graduates get an S1. It is such a broad band and it does not discriminate sufficiently. That is the formal approach to employment. A district office would employ teachers and say, 'You're going to this school.'

The reality is, however, that principals increasingly have a choice of who they get as their graduates. In the Nambour district, in primary schools the principals will very rarely receive a teacher that they do not ask for. They have the final say. They get a choice. I will leave it to later principals to describe that, but the approach we have used has been for us to say to principals, 'Look, who do you want as graduates? We want to get graduates into your schools.' The answer from principals has been, 'We will take the BLM graduates, thank you.' So basically all of the last two cohorts have been employed, either permanently or on a contract basis.

To get a permanent appointment with Education Queensland you have to sign a contract that says you will serve anywhere in Queensland at some stage. Our preference is to have them work in our schools for a further two years after graduating and then do the country service. However, the reality is that many of our young people say, 'I'll work for a year and then I'll go overseas,' or 'I'll do this.' People do not work by those rules anymore. We want to create a balanced work force. We were finding that there was an aged work force in this geographic part of Queensland, and this has been a very important strategy for us to get balance, renewal and professional energy into our work force.

Mr Turner—I would like to go back a couple of points to your first question about where we lost the plot: if it makes fundamental sense, why haven't we been doing it? I think the fundamental difference for me has been that CQU came and said, 'We want to deliver teacher education and we want your input,' whereas, under the old B.Ed programs that I was involved in, a book would arrive and then a few weeks later the student would arrive, and you would never seen anyone from the university. The student would do their prac and then pack up and go back. Essentially, under the BLM, part of the program is delivered in the school, in a tutorial sense. That was a fundamental difference from saying: 'Here's your book; here's your student. Thank you very much for your involvement.'

You talked about teaching not being rocket science and Rob has talked about the relationship between teacher and student. We are in a time, though, when we are getting a growing body of research around teaching that was not available to us before. Perhaps, to coin a phrase, the art of teaching has moved into the science of learning, because with the studies into what facilitates outcomes for students, things like the brain sciences, there is a growing body of information that the BLM takes note of. And, as I said before, that can influence what is happening in my school too, because it encourages conversations that otherwise might not happen.

Mr SAWFORD—I have taken up too much time, Chair, but I just wanted to finish up by responding to what David said. One of the things that impressed me about your contribution was that you did not make the excuses we have heard so much in recent years. I do not underestimate the role of people like you and of teachers in schools. You said that you can run a good program and you do not use socioeconomic background, gender, religion, culture or ethnicity as an excuse for failing. Yet when you read many of these submissions, excuses for why we fail are on every page. You never used that once and I would imagine that the local principal here, from the conversation we had over morning coffee, has never used that once.

Mr Turner—That is partly because the evidence is that teachers can and do make a difference. The other part of it is that making excuses is disempowering: why would you concede defeat before you have started?

Mr SAWFORD—That is right.

Councillor Brennan—I appreciate the opening-up of this area of conversation. It goes a little broader—I always have a go at these guys about having their heads so much inside the industry. I am fully aware of the advantages of having young people remain in our community and study here, particularly education. Once again, it is just a bit outside the specifics of your question about teacher education, but it is certainly about the advantages of local higher education. One of the elements you can point to in the failure of the previous education program is in the high

drop-out rate of teachers and the low self-esteem that has been identified in the teacher fraternity. With the integration of our brightest and best young people into the community—they stay here, they have families here, they learn here and they pass it on to the younger people here—there is a natural broadening of the whole process. It also raises the community up, and these kids are full of self-esteem. I think that, as you see the BLM implemented more and more, you will find that teachers again have that respect for themselves and that the industry will gain respect—not by putting up posters or advertising how good they are, and they are a terrific group of people, but just by having significant benefits on the ground in communities and in partnership with those communities, which is what this is all going to grow from. I think it will pick up a lot of the gaps that have been recognised but that no-one knows how to fill.

Ms BIRD—I would like to briefly follow that up, and perhaps there is an aspect of this question for each of you. I come from a coastal region in New South Wales where, 16 years later, I am still on the waiting list for a permanent teaching job in that region, because there is a high demand for jobs. My understanding is that, firstly, that is an issue with this region. Would you like to reflect—this might be for you, David—on the impact that has on schools and the engagement with young people when you have an ossifying staff? I would have been the same if I had stayed in teaching for that long. It is human nature: without the injection of new thinking and exciting new practices, you become like that. It appears to me that this program, by putting a certain quantum of people into a school, also supports them in maintaining what they have learnt. One of the most crushing effects when you come enthusiastically into a school is that, if there is just one or two of you, there is an overriding cultural pressure to conform to the existing behaviours and attitudes. Can you just reflect on that numbers aspect, David? Lew, can you tell me whether you have actually seen a flow-on through to the community with regard to things like crime rates et cetera?

Councillor Brennan—Yes, we have. Did you want David to go first?

Mr Turner—On the first part of the question, relating to employment: that is certainly an issue. Maybe Rob could address this after I have had a say, because I think the teacher transfer policy is an issue in schools. I am pleased to say that there is not a whole lot of contract employment in a lot of the schools around the place—and not in mine—but it can be a factor. What will happen if a teacher says, 'I'm not going bush; I won't do country service in line with the transfer policy,' is that they will inevitably end up with another employer—so they will stick with us for a few contracts, but then they will end up in an independent school or go overseas. They also may say that they will do their country service and they will come into the school and do their two years and, when it comes to actually being appointed out west, they may well say, 'No, thank you very much, I'm off to London or China,' or 'I've got a job somewhere else.' So it is a factor for the employing authorities longer term. The nature of the work force has changed and I do not think people are going to stay around forever waiting for permanency. Maybe Rob will pick up on that. The other thing is that the critical mass notion of the BLM is an important one. Again, because there is a cohort of students within a school, it engages them in conversations where, if they were there by themselves, it might not be as effective.

Mr McAlpine—In the area of primary education we have several thousand potential employees on our books in this part of Queensland, but they do not want to go all over the state. Queensland is a diverse geographical spread and we have to staff the whole of Queensland. My responsibility has been this geographic area. We have accorded preference to graduates as

opposed to people who are general applicants, as part of a deliberate strategy to build our work force capability and to add that richness to our existing schools work force. It has not always been welcomed by general applicants for employment. There are two sides to it. I respect the fact that those folk who are seeking permanent employment with Education Queensland on the Sunshine Coast can at times be upset where we have taken this strategy.

Ms BIRD—Can you clarify for me how many that would be? We have a similar thing in New South Wales with what we term 'super grads'. Once there is only one in a school, my observation is that they very quickly cave into the reigning culture in the school. How do you manage those positions that you are talking about?

Mr McAlpine—We will choose the schools we put graduates in as well. So we will not place our graduates in hostile environments and we will not place graduates one-off very often—unless it is a known, very supportive environment. It is a carefully considered professional decision and much of it rests with the leadership of the principal.

Mr Turner—The other point on BLM graduates is that you do not want to underestimate the capability of these people. They are coming into our schools and making a difference from day one. There have been examples where it does not take 10 years for them to establish themselves in their careers and start making a difference.

Ms BIRD—And many of them are mature age, which I imagine would give them more capacity to do that.

Mr McAlpine—Yes.

Mr Turner—And there have been graduates who, on their first day in schools, on their first day of appointment in the profession, are running PD for other teachers; or graduates who are taking teacher leadership roles within schools, in particular curriculum areas or innovation areas et cetera. I can think of a few examples where these people come out and make a difference from day one.

Ms BIRD—I think the observations that principals make a great difference to how that is received in the school is very true.

Councillor Brennan—There are quite a number of indicators of the success of what we are doing. Some of them are very tangible, like the research done by the Dusseldorp Foundation into the work of the youth commitment partnership. All of the high schools in this student catchment area, which is Noosa shire plus Coolum High, are members of the youth commitment partnership along with about 25 to 30 organisations, including some businesses, state agencies and federal agencies.

The results of the inquiry into the effectiveness of youth commitment partnerships in Australia have clearly indicated a lowering of unemployment for young people in those regions. This information is all freely available on the Dusseldorp web site or I can pass this on to you. The results are quite comprehensive about the successes. Once again, they point to the breadth of this partnership. It is difficult for me to just pin it down as a teacher education thing.

Economic statistics clearly show that, for every young person who leaves the region to study, about $50,000 a year leaves the region. In the Noosa Shire we now have 350 students progressing through the Bachelor of Learning Management or postgraduate studies. The advantages of this in terms of the broadening of our economy—which was a major issue for Noosa, which had all its eggs in the tourism basket and created some of the problems of young people leaving the region—are clear. As well as that, the Central Queensland University Noosa hub has played a tremendous role in sharing a community vision and working with the council to identify future curriculum or course opportunities that will help progress our community around hospitality, design and all sorts of things like that that Noosa has recognised as the way forward for its community. A tremendous partnership has developed through that that we would like to embrace and grow.

Ms LIVERMORE—I would like to go back to Sharon's question in the discussion about graduates going out into schools once they have finished their course. Robin, you were explaining or describing that very specific process of allocating students to schools. Is that something that you do here in this district, or is that a similar approach right across education districts?

Mr McAlpine—I cannot comment on other parts of Queensland. I know how we do it here, and it certainly does vary. The remote parts of Queensland would have to be different.

Ms LIVERMORE—You were talking about keeping the students within the family of schools as students and then as graduate teachers. Is there any evidence yet of what happens when they go outside the cocoon here and whether they are thriving in schools where some of these approaches are quite alien to the work force and the principals?

Mr McAlpine—We do not have any evidence of that because we are only in our second year of graduates.

Mr Turner—Some of ours are about to be transferred out to do country service. I think that ACER report looked at the BLM in a broader sense too. Some of those graduates are outside of the south-east corner; they are across the state.

Ms LIVERMORE—My other question is about the nuts and bolts of the partnership and the positive experience of schools within the partnership model of teachers who are very willing to take part in supervising students and that sort of thing. Is there any evidence yet within the schools of what that means to those teachers? Are those teachers then picking up promotions and being recognised as a result of their participation in this program?

Mr McAlpine—Particularly in terms of further formal study, that is where the masters component of the program is critical. They take on curriculum leadership positions and a number also aspire to deputy principal and principal positions. We have had a couple of people who have won promotional positions partly through the work they are doing here but, again, in a local context, this is the most competitive part of Queensland to win a promotional position in.

Ms CORCORAN—Robin, I think I heard you say in your introductory statement something about the model working well here but that it cannot just be picked up and put somewhere else. Can you explain that?

Mr McAlpine—The relationships that underpin the model are critical. The development of those local sets of relationships, the mind-sets—almost the philosophical underpinning and framework—are essential to the success of the model. It is not simply a matter of saying, 'This is the model that is successful.' Education Queensland has a number of successful partnerships with universities—the RATEP model, for example, and so on—that are different to this one. So I would not promote the idea that this model is simply able to be picked up and mandated. The relationships, the philosophical underpinning, the work of the university and the disposition of the university have been critical to the success of the program. The mind-set that Professor Richard Smith came to the table with when he said, 'We want to start with a blank page and design this in partnership with you,' is something that principals have not been used to. They have embraced it and they have seen the benefits. It is also about listening to one another. Perhaps those principals, if they are able to replicate it, can develop the model, but it is not simply the model being picked up and moved.

Ms CORCORAN—So if somebody else wants to take this particular way of operating on board, it is the mind-set that is the first critical ingredient that we need?

Mr McAlpine—I think so—and also the disposition and the philosophical underpinning. It has to have that philosophical base. It has to have the leadership. That is the other critical dimension for me. The leadership of our principals is very important in this. A principal has to be able to persuade and influence the staff to come to a point where they say: 'We're going to be part of this, even though it means more work for us. And we are going to see benefits for our students because we're going this way.' It does not become an industrial issue. We have not had industrial issues in our schools around this. We are not on all occasions working exactly to the industrial award agreement. It is a professional paradigm, as distinct from an industrial paradigm.

Ms CORCORAN—That leads me on to my second question. David, you made the point that it costs the school something to undertake that—and Robin has just talked about the extra imposts. Can you tell me what those extra imposts and costs are?

Mr Turner—The cost is not so much financial; it is in areas such as supervising teachers having to give up their time. If you have a cohort of 10 or 15 BLM students coming into your school, there are the logistics of where to put them—whether the staff room is going to be big enough and whether there is the office space. There is a whole range of other things that occupy your time to get that facilitated. So it is not dollars and cents; it is time and organisation and making it work. By and large, though, the tack I have taken with teachers is that these are extra people coming into our school to assist us in our work. Sure, they are here to learn and they will have tasks and work that needs to be undertaken that a supervising teacher will need to manage. Sometimes you will have BLM students that need that extra time. As a professional you know that a good student teacher can be great and that a not-so-good student teacher can require a lot of work, a lot of nurturing and a lot of support. That still happens from time to time. But it is an additional resource. I think this was touched on with Richard and David talking about the PD the university brings to the staff as well. That is dollars through the door too. That is PD that we would not necessarily have invested in.

Ms CORCORAN—I was not necessarily going to define costs in terms of dollars and cents but, during the break I was talking to Trish, who is going to appear a bit later on, and she made a

comment about a job that she will have to do shortly, which is to mark assignments. Is there extra work, in that sense, that is different from what we used to call student teachers coming from other institutions?

Mr Turner—Yes, although the university does compensate for that in a way too. My understanding is that, where there are assignments to be marked, it is done by the school's learning manager. To use the old terminology, I suppose it is like a tutor that a university employs in the school to learn to manage the learning management students, to oversee the program within the school. That brings funding into the school and the school can decide to use that if, for example, that person needs to be released. So, yes, in some circumstances, depending on the person's role within the school, there would be assignments to mark.

Ms CORCORAN—What I have been getting to, though, is that there are different things for teachers to do in a school that takes on these undergraduates that they would not have to do outside of the BLM program, or am I missing the point?

Mr Turner—I do not think it is too different for the supervising teacher. For the classroom teacher who is supervising the BLM student, that relationship is fairly similar. But, if you take on a learning management role with the cohort of BLM students in the school, there are differences, because that is a new role. That was not the case with the BM program.

Mr McAlpine—To clarify further, in the case of Trish Gray, I would understand that the marking of assignments that Trish is doing relates to her work as a lecturer at Central Queensland University. Perhaps David might be able to clarify further on that. That is a role that she takes on part time in conjunction with her duties as an employee of Education Queensland. I have had the same conversation with Trish this morning, and she said to me, 'What I need to do is to use some of my teacher release time to buy in someone to replace me to allow me to go home and mark those assignments during those days, as distinct from marking them during my holidays.'

Ms CORCORAN—David, you made the comment that BLM graduates are coming to schools and from day one are taking on roles which you would not normally expect them to do. We heard earlier this morning about the typical student being 35 and female, and I am wondering if the graduate who comes in and does that is a 35-year-old female, or is it a 22-year-old? Is it a function of the BLM, but perhaps also a function of their life experiences, that gives those new graduates—

Mr Turner—Not necessarily. I am just thinking of the particular circumstances. Some of those teachers have already done their internship in that school, so they have built a relationship with the staff over the year before they are appointed. That relationship might help facilitate their ability to run a PD activity, but I can think of another occasion with the school up the road from me where there is a young graduate who has taken on a leadership and curriculum coordination role within the school in their second year.

Mr SAWFORD—One of the first things you notice after reading the title, the Bachelor of Learning Management program, is the immediate identification right underneath of the trinity of education: how, what and why. It is already there. I can tell you, when you read through all these other submissions you could use a magnifying glass and in some you would not find an

underpinning philosophy. In others you would not find any delivery mechanisms or any processes. I think this is one of only two that we have come across so far that actually has a trinity: there is an idea, there is the process and there is the outcome. There is a coherence to those three.

I keep coming back to this question and I am going to ask it a third time. Maybe this is my fault; I do not think I have actually explained the question well. I understand what you are saying about this model not being mandated somewhere else and that it may not look like this somewhere else, but if the model does not have a rationale or an idea, if the model does not have an underpinning philosophy and it does not have a coherent process, delivery mechanism or coherent outcome, nothing will save it. When I think about what has been said here this morning—I think all of us have been very much impressed with what we have heard this morning, and it was also the same feeling we got when we listened to the people from Victoria University—I feel as if we are with you. You can follow a coherent sequence. I want to come back and ask the question again: the model may look different somewhere else, but doesn't the model have to have the elements that this model has?

Mr McAlpine—That is correct.

Mr SAWFORD— They may be described in another way, but it has to have those three elements, surely?

Mr McAlpine—It has to have the philosophical underpinnings and work through exactly those steps.

Mr SAWFORD—I apologise about before. Maybe I did not explain myself well. I probably did not.

Mr McAlpine—I have perhaps been a tad evasive about providing a direct answer. I was expressing a concern about seeing this model as something that could just be picked up as a structure and replicated somewhere else. The critical part of this has been the process that has been worked through. If that process—the partnership and the philosophical underpinning—is worked through, then that process can be replicated and it may produce a different model. My overriding anxiety was that, in a structural sense, someone might think, 'We can simply pick this structure up and relocate it.'

Mr SAWFORD—If you felt that, I was not trying to suggest that. I probably said it in a clumsy way. Thank you for the clarification.

Councillor Brennan—I think you have identified a serious enthusiasm around a very good product and a great idea. I see that you are embracing it and I have no doubt that if you were in the area you would become a part of furthering this. I think Rob is saying that perhaps those elements are not available in other communities and that that is where it might be a bit of a struggle—just trying to duplicate this, without the champions, the good partners, the enthusiasm and the understanding of exactly what you have identified.

Ms BIRD—Taking that on board, I would hope, however, that through this process we are able to identify some critical factors that should be required of all teacher preparation training

programs—and the quality of what our kids get in schools does not rely on good relationships in a region, such as those you have here. That is why we appreciate what you are telling us: it helps us identify some critical factors. I want to ask David about something I think we have missed, which is the professional development courses that the university offers to existing staff. I think it is also a really interesting aspect for our inquiry to look at, in terms of the ongoing professional development criteria we have. Could you tell us a bit about that.

Mr Turner—Aside from the Master of Learning Management, which gives practising teachers a postgraduate opportunity to further their profession, there is an example at my school. We piloted a program last year to implement a pedagogical framework in the school. The dimensions of learning framework is a teaching framework that is based in research, so it is research supported. It involved the whole staff. The university facilitated a whole year's consultancy. They had lecturers working in my school with teachers, to help them plan and implement the dimensions of a learning framework. It was highly successful and we are seeing learning outcomes from students now because of this work. This is our second year in it and, because the pilot was successful, that has now rolled out this year so that in the second year of the BLM courses the students start to use dimensions of learning as part of the framework of their learning too. There is some evidence—I think David talked about it this morning—that when a student teacher comes into the classroom they may either stick with the new research and lingo they are bringing from university, which might be confronting to their supervising teacher, or they may conform with the supervising teacher and get through the course. This year every supervising teacher of second-year students in the BLM program at Noosa undertakes PD in the dimensions of learning so that they know the theory and the content behind what the student is going to bring to the classroom.

Ms BIRD—Can I get really boring and ask: who funds this and do you have trouble getting money for it?

Mr Turner—The university funds it. The university provides the PD—although I might stand corrected here.

Mr McAlpine—It is jointly funded.

Mr Turner—It is jointly funded through the schools involved in the program and the university. The university provides the expertise, but it is—

Ms BIRD—Is there a specific aspect of the professional development budget that is dedicated to this stuff?

Mr Turner—It is a school-level decision, but, again, this is where the partnership comes out. If you want to be a second-year teaching school, then your staff have to engage in this PD.

Ms BIRD—Do they have a global budget or do you get an allocated professional development budget?

Mr Turner—No, it is a global budget.

Mr McAlpine—But with a requirement to allocate 10 per cent of your budget to PD.

Ms BIRD—Would you see value in federal government having a role where it specifically funds innovation in all sorts of areas? That is something that the federal government has traditionally done in schools—BSP funding and so forth. Do you think it would be facilitative for schools if those sorts of innovative professional development programs could access a federal funding program?

Mr McAlpine—Yes.

Ms BIRD—I would have been very surprised if you had said no!

Mr Turner—I have to backtrack a little; I am confusing two programs. My understanding—and we might need David to clarify this—is that the specific second-year program, the dimensions of learning PD framework, is cost neutral for schools. That does not come out of my school's PD fund. The university people come out and provide PD for the supervising teachers.

Ms BIRD—Because it is tied to supervision of their students?

Mr Turner—That is correct. We also have a program running where that PD is offered to additional staff in the school, who might not be supervising teachers. That is where it is funded.

Mr McAlpine—Education Queensland, however, last year did provide on a state-wide basis some seed funding to support the program. Some of that funding has carried forward this year to part fund the university staff who are delivering this program. So there is a contribution at a strategic level from Education Queensland to the program.

CHAIR—Thank you, gentlemen. That was most informative.

[12.08 pm]

BRADFORD, Mr Peter, Principal, Cooroora Secondary College; Central Queensland University, Noosa

GRAY, Mrs Patricia (Trish), Learning Manager, Head of Curriculum and Acting Deputy Principal, Tewantin State School, Education Queensland; Central Queensland University, Noosa

GROVER, Mr Robert, Principal, Tewantin State School, Education Queensland; Central Queensland University, Noosa

McALPINE, Mr Robin, Executive Director, Schools, Nambour Education District, Education Queensland; Central Queensland University, Noosa

TURNER, Mr David, Chair, Central Queensland University Noosa Steering Committee, and Principal, Kenilworth State School, Education Queensland; Central Queensland University, Noosa

CHAIR—Welcome. I remind you that these proceedings are proceedings of the parliament. I invite you to make some opening remarks.

Mr Grover—I have been principal at this school, Tewantin, for 17 years. Up until five years ago we used to have prac teachers from a variety of universities in Queensland, quite a few from interstate and even at one stage a prac student from the Netherlands. Over a period of time we became disillusioned with the quality of those people and the lack of relationship we had with the universities that we were dealing with. The relationship was basically a paper relationship—very rarely did we see anyone—and we became frustrated that when those people got permanent positions in the school there was a huge amount of work we had to do in induction. Probably at the very earliest it was a year down the track before they were work ready, and more often than not two years.

We were also disillusioned with the inconsistency of ratings of people who came to us. Someone would come rated S1, which is the top rating for a graduate, and we would find ourselves in a very short time thinking: 'Well, they should've barely passed.' Because universities would just send prac students out to wherever they wanted to go. The most recent experience we had was that someone who did their prac at a two-teacher school way up in the Atherton Tableland somewhere came to us with a rating of S1, and we had an awful lot of work to do with that teacher.

Then along came Dave Lynch with this idea to start up a teacher education program based locally. He invited us to participate and gave us the opportunity to have quite an involvement in that program—a say in the content of it and how it operated—and the advantages of having the interns in our school. So we went from that stage of being totally disillusioned with teacher training to coming on board with Central Queensland University and the Noosa hub exclusively, to the point now where, to cut a long story short, we do not want any graduates unless they have

gone through the BLM program. I will leave it there and hand over to Trish to fill in the gap from where we came on board with CQ uni up until now.

Mrs Gray—Bob's disillusionment was shared by most of us, and it was not just here at Tewantin school. It was in neighbouring schools, and I suspect it was a lot further afield than that. As Bob mentioned, there was a lack of communication with the universities. Sometimes you got a visit from somebody, but they did not stay long, and we really did not know what the uni was expecting or what we were expected to do. The most difficult thing for us was that we would often have these students come into our school for such a very short period of prac. Sometimes, particularly with postgrad students who may have done a science degree and then they were doing a one-year education degree before they became a teacher, students would come out here for one six-week block and that would be it. That was the length and breadth of their prac experience, and we had to take them from having no teaching skills to being qualified in six weeks. That is unfair, and our teachers were falling apart trying to do this with a person with no teaching experience.

I was hearing what the teachers were saying to me: 'Trish, I don't want to be involved in any of this prac stuff anymore. It's too hard. It's too heartbreaking when these people don't get the great score at the end that they want to get to get them a job, but I can't in all honesty give them this score.' And that was the truth. So we had just decided that we were pulling the pin. We were not going to be a prac school any longer. And that is when, as fortune had it, Dave started talking to us, and Dave was sharing the same experiences that we were. He was a principal in a local school and he was saying: 'This is just not good enough. How do you get good teachers on your staff? Teacher training's got a lot to be accountable for here.' I suppose I should have been a bit more enthusiastic at the time, and hindsight is a wonderful thing—I would be more enthusiastic now—but I said, 'Well, we'll try it for a little while, Dave,' because we had been burnt.

We decided that the first year we would take first-year students, the second year we would take second-year students and the third year we would take third-year students, which we did. We then took our level of involvement one step further, because I started delivering maths courses at the university. So that was great for me because I could see from both sides. As learning manager here in the school it meant I was the coordinator for the students in the school, I was the liaison person and I was always on site when they were here. So I could sometimes answer some of their uni questions, I could answer my staff's uni questions and I could answer my own uni questions, if those bits had not been written yet—and I often wrote them for Dave and said, 'Well, we'll answer this one this way, won't we?'

It has been a work in progress and, I feel, a very successful work in progress because both sides of the partnership have been very willing to accept the partner and to encourage feedback and honest criticism. My voice is not only heard in the university as a representative of the school but also valued. As Bob said, we are now in the most wonderful position—a position I felt, after 26 years in schools, I would never be in—where we can say that we want, and we can choose, the best teachers for our school. We are very proud of the fact that seven out of 31 of our classroom teachers are BLM graduates.

Mr Bradford—Trish has touched on the role of learning management in the school and it seems to me that it is a critical aspect of this whole program, as you have heard. Richard talked earlier about the concept of learning management as being to do with design rather than

management in the sense of control. The involvement that I have had in this goes back a long way. I have known Dave Lynch for many years. Whilst I congratulate him on being promoted to some place else I am also sorry to see him go.

I am noticing clearly that the inquiry is interested in what can be taken from this model and how we can influence, I suppose, other teacher education programs by using the lessons we have learnt from this. One of the key things is that concept of the learning manager in a role that sits in liaison—and more than liaison—between the school, the employing authority, and the university, and it is exemplified by the kinds of things that Trish just talked about. There is that dual responsibility of the teacher as a professional to be involved at the research end that the universities provide and to have their feet firmly on the ground because there needs to be a teacher in the classroom who is not only competent but beyond competent in working with the kids from this area. That is a key element to it.

That is expensive—we touched on that before. You have heard about that and asked questions about how that is managed. I am sure that is in the paper Dave has given you. That has been part of the learning that we have done on this little journey over the last five years, or a little more—the extent to which each of the institutions involved take responsibility. Rob commented earlier about the shared funding of some of these positions. That has been something that we have had to work hard at. The statement that there has not been any industrial angst around it in terms of the teaching professions is probably fairly accurate because it has been managed. I do not know that the same lack of industrial angst has occurred at the university. You might want to talk to David a little more about that aspect of it.

The learning manager is a key role in my view and it has worked in the school by generating a kind of creative tension. The learning management sits in a couple of different spots. One is as an intermediary between the school and the university that I mentioned before. Those folk, in Trish's case, are working with student learning managers who in turn become learning managers in their own right, as defined by that degree. The creative tension is generated between what is known on behalf of experienced and energetic teachers who take on the student learning managers, and the exploration and the challenge that those student learning managers bring to the learning management in the school. That has a kind of ripple effect—it is probably more than a ripple; it is more like a big splash in many schools such as my own where we have a relatively small staff. There are about a dozen classroom teachers in the primary school and probably about 18 in the secondary. Ours is also a P10 school like David's. In the primary school we are now up to four BLM graduates, so around 25 per cent of our staff in that small primary school are recent graduates from here.

The impact they have had in that school has been tremendous, both in the way they have influenced the learning manager from our staff and in the way they are currently influencing the rest of the staff. The learning manager role is critical to this, as is the supportive stuff we talked about previously. Sharon mentioned this too. Teachers have a fairly strong culture and, for a neophyte, turning up to a science staffroom in a secondary school can be pretty scary if they want to try to challenge the environment that they are in. These folk have actually been quite competent at providing that challenge but, once again, they need the learning manager behind them to dust them off and support them. I do not mean support them in any sense of mollycoddling them or by being too tight but by continuing to say: 'Come on. There's stuff that you've learnt, and you need to keep on pushing those boundaries.'

The learning manager is one thing. At a broader level, it seems to me that it is incumbent upon employing authorities, universities, governments and so on to define policies that support the partnerships we have talked about in the preparation of teachers. As Rob hinted at before, that can be done and driven through system wide goals or target setting. Certainly in our own system it can be done through principals taking up a responsibility that is set within those targets. If we need to spend 10 per cent of our budget on professional development—and many schools spend a lot more than that—that can be professional development according to whatever brochure comes through the mail or it can be much more structured, in the way that David was talking about. So I think there are two critical components: the learning manager, sitting between the school and university and working in that joint role, and the policy support, and therefore the budgeting support and targeting of funds, that can manifest it.

Mr Turner—I will add one thing to what Peter was talking about. I think another thing to take away is the balance between workplace readiness and futures orientation. One of the criticisms has been: 'Your BLM students are spending more time in schools, so it is just like an apprenticeship.' I think the point might have been made earlier that it is going back to the old one-year trained teacher who gets inducted into the culture of a school and then performs in that role for the rest of their career. A critical part is that these people come out with the disposition to know: 'The world has changed and is changing. There will be new research about teaching and learning, and I will need to continue to respond to that and to changes in government policy, Education Queensland's new strategic directions and those sorts of things. They will come, and I will be required to respond to the changes in the world.' That is a critical part of the BLM. It is not just about being workplace ready; it is also about having the disposition to be futures orientated.

Mr McAlpine—The only comment I would add is that, in my role as executive director of schools, I visit and supervise 37 schools. I hear the comments that others have made about the impact of BLM graduates in a specific school during regular school visits. It can be from the first day of that graduate taking up duties in that school or at a range of stages. I see the impact in classroom practice, classroom student-teacher relationships and pedagogy and in the influence on the professional learning in that school. The disposition of the graduate and their professional approach to this as a commitment to a learning community and a school is something that I see coming through in that range of school visits.

Ms CORCORAN—In the list of points that we are supposed to be learning about through this session there is a thing called the portal task, which we have talked about before. Can you explain what a portal task is, as distinct from an example.

Ms BIRD—It sounds like something from *Doctor Who*!

Mrs Gray—Perhaps it is easier for me to explain, because I have a foot in each camp. As the students' maths lecturer and as a learning manager, which is like being the student teacher coordinator in a school, I get to see portal tasks from both sides of the fence; therefore I am able to really justify their existence. A portal task is a task that is demonstrating the student's skill in a practical, real-life situation. For example, in maths we talk about the theories behind maths learning and we talk about the different content of maths—the measurement and operations and things—and then we talk about planning for learning and the activities we do and the games we play, but until the students do a portal task and bring that all in we do not know that they can

really do it. With a portal task they come to a school, they perform the task with real kids in real classrooms with their mentor teacher and the mentor teacher basically grades them on it and says, 'This was good and that was good but maybe we need a bit more work on this.' This grading process is very much a two-way discussion at the end. To me that is a very valuable exercise. These portal tasks are situated all the way through the degree course; they are not just final things.

Mr Turner—In some situations, as Patricia just explained, they relate to a key learning area. A task might be achieving learning outcomes for a student in the area of maths by teaching a series of lessons. Another example would be a portal task in a course called Futures: through the course work students would be exposed to influences on the world, why the world is changing, globalisation, the IT revolution et cetera. There is the research that is now starting to inform teaching as to how schools could be better or why they should change from the battery hen Industrial Age model of a factory to a different approach. The portal task there is for the students to take all this knowledge and theory and design a school of the future or a classroom of the future. So it is a matter of saying: 'Given all this new knowledge, how would you redesign the school?' A demonstration of theory is essentially what a portal task is.

Ms LIVERMORE—I am curious to get feedback from some of the partner schools. Is there any reaction from parents when, for example, there might be 12 student teachers running around the place?

Mrs Gray—It is fantastic, and, granted, we do a bit of homework in that area too. At the beginning of the year in school newsletters we speak about the BLM program and how honoured we are to be a teaching school involved with the program. We frame it in a way that we are exposing their children to the benefits of having those extra people in their kids' classrooms. As you say, it can be a dozen; sometimes it is more in our school.

When these students are approaching the end of their course, they are here even more. For example, this year we have had out-of-phase students who graduated in June. They did 2½ weeks right at the beginning of the year, with three pupil-free days in the first two weeks of school so they could learn how you set up a class and get to know the kids and their needs. Then they visited one day a week, every week, until a couple of months ago when they did a three-week block. They took the class for the whole three weeks. By this time they are very well known to the kids because they are in the school every week. All of last term they did a 10-week block—an internship. At the end of last term when those people left the room they had actually been the kids' teacher, for all intents and purposes, for 15½ weeks plus one day on the other weeks. The classroom teacher had been with the kids for about four weeks. So what did the parents think? The parents wanted to know why the real teacher was going! But the parents do see it as a partnership. They see that they are very lucky having two people in the room with their children. They certainly hear their child coming home referring to 'Miss Brown/Miss Smith'. The kids see them as equal people to be respected in the room. There is a little bit of PR required, from our point of view, but it is very valuable PR and it pays off.

Mr Turner—Our school promotes the fact that we are a BLM teaching school and it is a feather in our cap. As I was explaining before, 12 students are supplying one on one instruction for students and helping them in the area of reading. We had a great under-eights day for the students—we promote the fact that the BLM students have played a significant role. We also had

a gala evening and business breakfast in education week that the BLM students were involved in. It is a constant promotion of the partnership and the role that they are playing in our school.

Mr Grover—Because we have been so heavily committed to the partnership, from the day these people walk into our school we treat them as teachers. In the school we refer to them as BLM teachers, not BLM students. That occurs from the first day in their first year. That attitude goes right through to the extent that at the end of last term when school reporting was being done, and there were parent-teacher interviews, we had two people doing them. That was the end of their internship and they had been through the process of sitting in on all of the parent-teacher interviews and had been involved on a fifty-fifty basis in writing the reports. In the time that we have had students at this school, I can remember two concerns from parents but that is far outweighed by all the accolades that we have received.

Mr Turner—When the internship comes about the BLM teacher is given the right to teach—provisional registration through the Board of Teacher Registration in Queensland—so, in fact, they have the approval to work in that classroom as a teacher for the period of the internship. I think the BTR requires that there is at least 50 per cent of time spent supervising that teacher but, as you can imagine, as the internship goes on these people become very capable and they fulfil the role of the teacher in a classroom. In a school like this, which has six interns a year, that, in essence, releases half-a-dozen teachers for five weeks in that 10-week period to work on other school development type activities.

Mr Grover—I would like to take that further. That is a tremendous bonus to us because, while those teachers have 50 per cent of their time committed to the BLM students, the other 50 per cent of the time they are at our disposal. We have used them to relieve whole year levels to go off and do professional development in school time which is so much more effective than doing professional development after school when they have done a day's work. Our involvement in the BLM program has coincided with an absolute turnaround in the attitude of our teachers towards professional development because we have been able to do it the right way and our partnership has allowed us to have that advantage.

Ms CORCORAN—I think my question has just been answered. My question was going to be: if the BLM teacher is in a classroom for such a lot of the time, how does the normal classroom teacher feel about that? What is their attitude to being hoicked out and told to do something else?

Mrs Gray—The relationship that develops between the supervising or mentor teacher and the BLM teacher is very interesting. I tend to call them mentors rather than supervisors because to me the word 'mentor' implies more of a partnership. Generally speaking, mentors and their students become very close. They are sharing a group of children. It has, in this school, formed into a very strong professional relationship between these two people. Many of these interns have become staff members upon graduation and that mentor will continue to mentor them over the next couple of years because that new graduate will turn to that person with questions and for advice. So we do see a very strong relationship there and we also see BLM interns saying things to their mentor teachers such as, 'Would you be available to come and take a reading group tomorrow?' That is what we encourage. We want that BLM intern to take control because as we say to them, 'Unless you feel that you can control the situation now and you're 100 per cent competent, we've still got some training to go.'

Mr Grover—One of the real beauties of the 10-week internship with the provisional registration is that we go out of our way to make sure that we get out of their way and let them have a class of their own. They do that over a period of 10 weeks, so they fall into holes in that period but they have to dig themselves out of the holes—whereas a four-week prac is different. Recently we took on, just as a matter of interest, a final-year graduate from the university at Armidale, and her final prac in third year or fourth year was for four weeks. Over those four weeks she got to the stage where she left a class and went away and the class then had to be tidied up. But in a 10-week internship, where we get out of the road as much as we can, people have to dig themselves out of the hole. That is where this work readiness thing comes in. When that person gets a job at my school next year I know that if she falls into a hole she will dig herself out of it.

Ms BIRD—There is a mistake that I have made and I hope one of you can clear it up. In the Bachelor of Learning Management do you do primary or secondary? Is it divided? Pardon my New South Wales language; am I talking only to primary schools here?

Mr Turner—Yes, the university does offer BLM early childhood, primary, middle schooling I think, and secondary courses, so there are divisions there. The message we give, especially in schools like those Peter and I are principals of, is that if you are registered as a teacher in Queensland, you are registered to teach from preschool to year 10. The specialisation only comes in for senior secondary teachers. So whilst you might have a desire to work in early childhood when you graduate and are appointed to my school, you might not teach early childhood and I need to know that you are capable in any of these year levels. So it is largely a generic conversation we have. As they progress through the university course, students can specialise in early childhood or—

Ms BIRD—It would really help me in the discussion if each of you could explain to me what your school is.

Mr Bradford—My school goes from preschool to year 10. It is Pomona State School. It has two sites: the primary school, which is preschool to year 7 on one side of town, and a small secondary school. The primary school has about 350 students and the secondary school has about 220 students from year 8 to year 10. It is on the other side of town. It is a new one and that is where the BLM program, Noosa, is housed. We host it there.

Can I make another comment, before I let these other fellows tell you about where they come from, about the parent involvement? At a different level it has been something of a challenge locally to have families accept that we have university students in our secondary campus with young adolescents. The way around that is that they are the teachers of the future. They are currently teachers, given the way that we work with them. In Queensland you have to have a blue card anyway and that demonstrates that you are of good character and so on. It is partly about the enculturation process for those folk in the school, but it is also the reciprocal process of demonstrating to the families around our little school that we are a small community but we can aspire to bigger things and we can have a higher education program operating here successfully, and so on.

Mr Grover—This school is a straight primary school, so we have about 800 students ranging from preschool—which is for children turning five—to grade 7, when students are turning 12 on average.

Ms BIRD—That is the mob I am familiar with. David, what is your school?

Mr Turner—It goes from preschool to year 10 but on one campus.

Ms BIRD—What concerns me with something like this particular program—which is so exciting and so innovative and which teaches people to integrate a whole lot of new, modern world views, like technology, into the classroom—is that in the primary school model, where we have a classroom where a class utilises resources, it is quite flexible and friendly to alternating teaching methods and so forth, whereas when you hit what I would know as high schools, which are years 7 to 12, it is very disillusioning and disheartening for a new teacher. They go in with all this energy and enthusiasm. My teaching background is in English and history. It was not until I hit a TAFE college that I was actually able to integrate technology into the teaching of English. There was no way we could get access to computers. It is a very frustrating and disheartening experience to do a very innovative teaching model and then go into a school and find it so hard to resource. It is difficult to sustain your enthusiasm. I would be interested in your reflections on that aspect of it, for the older students who are more driven by a certificate that has to be passed at the end, and all that sort of stuff.

Mr Turner—I do not know if I can add too much to that because I do not have a senior secondary aspect at my school, but we do have BLM students in secondary schools. For me, though, it is again about teacher capability. As I said, we have to get past, especially in small P10 schools, teachers coming to the school and saying, 'Hang on a second; I only teach this particular curriculum area and to this particular age group.' If you are a teacher, you should have the skill set to be able to teach across those divisions. If you are teaching in my school, I expect your skill set is such that you can teach not only your specific year 9 maths but also year 6 SOSE. So I cannot comment on—

Ms BIRD—It is highly alien in New South Wales. I find the concept that you are talking about is very difficult to get across.

Mr Bradford—It is early days in shifting that mind-set. The whole approach that we have taken with Central Queensland University is about challenging those sorts of mind-sets. I have a secondary background too, and I know exactly what you are talking about. In the school that I am in now, which only goes to year 10, we still face some of those sorts of issues, although, as David has pointed out, we cannot accept them in a small secondary department. To my staff's credit, they take on what they need to take on. Increasingly, the involvement of the BLM in the junior secondary school has been to broaden their perspectives so we say, 'You can teach science, which is your speciality, but you can also teach a bit of English, a bit of this and a bit of something else.' We have the benefit of one staffroom, so we are not divided into faculties and that kind of stuff.

So there are some advantages there, and that goes back to my point about authorities' policy frameworks for not just teacher education but the link into schools. There has to be a reciprocal relationship not just in terms of personal relationships but in terms of the way the facilities are

constructed et cetera. Rob can probably get further down the track, from a systemic point of view, about how this is already starting to challenge the mind-sets regarding, for a start, the architecture for a school, and then even going to the more fundamental questions, like 'Is a school a place like this?' and so on. It can get fairly broad. It is very early days in challenging that. In the early days of the BLM in secondary schools, we had some less than fortunate experiences through exactly that: a big staffroom and a BLM student-teacher finding the pressure of teachers with many years of accumulated experience just a bit too much to handle.

Mr McAlpine—We have to be honest and say that there have been some less than satisfactory experiences, particularly in the early days in the secondary settings. In relation to the importance of the discipline knowledge in a secondary setting, particularly in what we would term years 11 and 12, as students progress towards university entrance and other tertiary qualifications, we need to partner up with other universities to have access to science laboratories and the specialist discipline resources and expertise that are not available on this campus. That has to be acknowledged.

My other comment is that we are now seeing some of our secondary schools, such as the Sunshine Beach State High School, seeking out BLM graduates for the middle phase—which in Queensland we would term years 6 to 9—and asking them not to teach one or two subjects in the traditional secondary sense but to take cohorts of students in a middle phase approach so that they would teach across a range of discipline areas and transition that primary-secondary interface. The principal of the Sunshine Beach State High School is quite firm in his view that BLM graduates will be sought out for that middle phase particularly. He has two this year, and I am sure he will seek others as opportunities arise.

Ms BIRD—I would encourage them to put a submission in to this inquiry. Part of what we are trying to deal with is how best to train and produce teachers who can deal with the modern world. One of the challenges the modern world is posing us, to be quite frank, is not primary education—which has always had a capacity to be innovative and progressive—it is the middle school, where kids become disengaged and kids who went through primary schools quite successfully start to drop out and you get that negative experience. What excites me about this model is its capacity to address some of those problems. I think the real challenge would be convincing people that it is then applicable, within all those simple building constraints and teacher backgrounds and subject curriculum requirements, and that it is a feasible thing to start to pull into those schools. I would be interested to see a submission, if it is possible, from a school that is operating that model and to know how it addresses some of the longer term modern world problems that we are facing.

Mr McAlpine—I think teachers are moving with cohorts of students across the primary-secondary interface and classes are staying the same into the secondary setting.

Ms BIRD—And some prepare them for what that is about.

Mr McAlpine—A cohort of 25 students from the Sunshine Beach primary school goes across to a secondary campus and they stay as a cohort of students when they get over there or they go early.

Ms BIRD—I would be interested in something like that.

Mr Turner—This is the BLM focus on pedagogy: BLM students teach students; they do not teach subjects. That is a fundamental shift. Queensland has got the school reform longitudinal study that showed us the drop-off in pedagogy in classrooms in the junior secondary school that you were describing; hence, the middle phase reforms. That links nicely into QSE2010. It all melds together.

Mrs Gray—I would add that earlier today it was mentioned that the BLM does not prepare a student to be a grade 3 teacher; it very much encourages the student who has enrolled as a secondary or a middle school teacher to get out into that child-care facility, to go into that preschool and do a prac in there, to go into year 4 and then maybe in the internship concentrate on the year 8 class or year 9 class. It really does encourage a global experience during those uni years.

Mr SAWFORD—Are there limits to teaching across the curriculum and, if so, what are they?

Mr Turner—I think there should be. I do not think there are in terms of content, up until year 10—I am talking about the compulsory years. The biggest limit I would see is ICT capacities: students being able to use the technologies that are now available. I know other people have other thoughts on that.

Mr Bradford—There are elements in there to do with a teacher's level of comfort in the discipline that they are being asked to work in.

Mr SAWFORD—Skill and interest.

Mr Bradford—That is right. If people are being challenged to teach science, for example, in the lower secondary and they have not taught it before, they need a lot of support. But my experience has been that, with that support, they can do it. One of the things that has come from the BLM program—you have heard mention of the master's learning management program, which has evolved from it, I suppose—is that it generates the opportunity for people to do further professional development, but with the accreditation of a master's degree or a graduate diploma or whatever along the way, where they can choose the kind of learning that they need. So, if I have someone in my school who is being challenged by having to work across the discipline, that is the area of study that they could follow through. You ask: are there limits? In my view, yes, there are limits, but they are not insurmountable. You certainly cannot ask teachers to go in there and say, 'You can teach it and you can be half a page in front of the kids.' That is inappropriate.

Mr SAWFORD—It just seems to me that there are plenty of people who are very competent in a curriculum area but the outstanding teacher is the one who understands, say, the language and the spirit of mathematics, which is a lot stronger than the subject of mathematics. Not everyone can have that. Are there real limits in terms of how far you can go across the curriculum in that sense?

Mr Bradford—I am sure there are. I do not want to get into a debate with David about it but there are certainly limits in terms of where people's passions lie, the level of interest and so on. Having said that, if people are prepared to and need to, in a professional sense, work across a range of discipline areas, particularly in the lower secondary school, I think that can be

accommodated. The BLM process underpins that because of the pedagogical approaches that it takes. But I would also take Robin McAlpine's point about the increasing demand in the upper part of the secondary school for knowledge expertise. One of the issues of that is to make sure that the current—

Mr McAlpine—If I could add something there: I am of the view that in years 11 and 12 there are limits, which relate to discipline, knowledge, skill, spirit and understanding. We simply cannot take a humanities teacher and say, 'You've now got a physics class in year 12.' But, in the middle phase particularly, there are opportunities to organise the curriculum in ways other than the traditional key learning area discipline approaches. The New Basics approach in Queensland, where students work on a rich task that integrates a full range of curriculum areas, has successfully demonstrated that teachers can teach across the curriculum. Schools have curriculum frameworks that are developed within the policy that enables them to have a key learning area approach, a thematic approach or a New Basics approach so long as they actually cover the outcomes of the syllabus documents. That can be covered by a team of teachers, not just necessarily one teacher, or it can be covered through a range of learning experiences. The question is complex and I think it has different answers in different contexts.

Mr SAWFORD—What factors got you on board BLM in the first place? What kept you on board?

Mrs Gray—As I mentioned, it was our disillusionment. Also, I personally felt guilty that I was pulling out of a preservice program. I think we all feel duty-bound to continue our career into the next generation and to support students as they come along. I was feeling that I was not doing the right thing but I had no choice because the teachers were saying: 'We just can't do this anymore. It's too stressful, it's too demanding and we are not getting the results that we want.' That is what made me come on board. I could see that Dave had the same viewpoint that we had, and he was saying, 'This will be different, and if it's not different you pull out then.' I think it is that duty to pass your career to the next generation, but you want to do it well.

Mr Grover—I have a list here of the critical factors of why I wanted to be in it and why I wanted to stay in it. One is the partnership that we have with the university. We did not have that with any of the other universities we operated with. It is almost an intangible thing. Rob was talking before about taking this structure and recreating it somewhere else; that intangible partnership is probably one of the hard things to transpose. That was built from the ground up, not from a university down. Another is the orientation of this BLM course towards practice and pedagogy rather than theory. The theory is there to back up the practice and pedagogy, not there as an entity of its own.

Another factor is the work readiness of the people who are produced from this program. That is a crucial factor for me as the employer, I guess. Another factor is the futures orientation that these students come out with. I have every confidence that these people throughout their career will always be challenging themselves, because it is just a built-in characteristic. I do not know how it is done but they all have these built-in characteristic of reflecting, wanting to make it better, wanting to change and looking for more professional development opportunities.

I think a crucial thing in the success of this program is the on-site learning manager, tying up all the loose ends. One of the really important roles that Trish plays here is in the culling process;

that is important. When we used to get graduates from other universities, I saw a lot of people coming through who, in all honesty, probably should have been culled. Here, with the input of the on-site learning manager, that process can happen much earlier and at a very honest and sincere partnership level, where it is pointed out to the person that it is in their best interest as well as in the school's best interest. That is basically it from me.

Mr Bradford—My list is the same as Bob's. But the other thing that attracted me very much to it was the notion of the school having the responsibility as a significant institution, if you like, in a local community and generating a lot of economic benefit to small communities such as the one that I work in. Beyond that it is being able to play a role in the community capacity building and tapping into the social capital that is available in our little part of the world to help shift a mind-set that I found when I went there nearly a decade ago, which was very much about doom and gloom and the kids having to move away and so on. Councillor Lew Brennan has talked about that. So it was partly for the reasons that Bob has outlined from that dimension of my professional responsibilities. The other dimension was very much about community relationships; that was an additional attraction.

Mr Turner—For me it was the disillusionment with the status quo and the realisation that I shared with David and the university that we could not keep doing things the way we were doing them with the increasing outcomes-education and the increasing issues hitting schools, with teachers being bashed around the head with all the social problems and schools being to blame for everything that is going on. Business in schools could not stay the same, and this was an opportunity to make a difference for the kids.

Mr SAWFORD—In terms of supervising teachers, it has been put to us that three major issues need to be addressed. How would you address these: status; time off, maybe non-contact time; and remuneration for supervising teachers? What is the best way to deal with these?

Mrs Gray—I can address that one. It is very interesting to note how much time our students in this school are being supervised for which our teachers are receiving no remuneration whatsoever, and those teachers are quite happy for it to be like that. They see the balance being that they have another pair of hands to help them out in their room during the day. They are the day visits, which are not official prac times but are built into the course, and the teacher receives nothing for those. The first 2½ weeks that I was talking about for our third-year students is a very crucial time for them to come in and see how you start a new school year with a new group of kids. The teachers get no remuneration for that either. But I do not hear teachers complaining, because in those two weeks they just love having that pair of capable hands in their room with them.

They receive financial rewards when it comes to the block period. There are usually two block prac periods a year, generally three weeks each time, and that is a princely sum of about $20 a day. But when those teachers receive that money they say, 'Oh! That's a bonus.' That is the attitude in this school. So I do not see that as a big issue here, because the value of these people in the school far outweighs any other reward that may come.

Mr Grover—It almost gets to the point where you would not want supervising teachers doing it because of the money. You want them doing it because they want to invest in the future and see things improve.

Mr SAWFORD—Is that a form of status?

Ms BIRD—Professional satisfaction?

Mr SAWFORD—Professionalism?

Mr Grover—Yes. There is a tremendous amount of professional pride in being a supervising teacher in this school.

Mrs Gray—Most definitely.

Mr Turner—I think the status issue will resolve itself when we take back our profession and take control of what our work is—that is, pedagogy. It is not about this interest group saying, 'This is what has to be taught in schools.' It is about the skill set we have to teach. I think the BLM has given the opportunity—in this area, anyway—for us to be proud to be a teaching school.

Ms BIRD—You all have to start speaking in plain English. That is your problem!

Mr Grover—We have more people in this school who want to be supervising teachers than we have prac students.

Mr Bradford—It has been my experience that no teacher does this for the remuneration. In fact, apart from some troubles about bonuses, I suspect that most people think it is a bit of joke because of the level of that remuneration. So I would not go down that track. The other thing I would like to add is that some thought should be given to the way the internship operates in teacher training programs and to the possibility of paying people who are at the point in their professional development where they are receiving provisional registration as teachers but, because of the constraints of the employment authorities and the size of budgets and so on, we frankly cannot pay them. I think there is an opportunity to investigate that a bit further.

Ms BIRD—Could you explain that to me, because I am also not familiar with the internship.

Mr Bradford—There are many programs around in professional development, particularly with doctors, of which internships are an integral part. Internships in Queensland have come and gone over the years. I was involved in a couple of working parties a couple of decades ago. They are about having a block of time towards the end of your training in which you move from being a student and into the profession.

Ms BIRD—So you are still enrolled in the university as a student?

Mr Bradford—As a student. It is actually part of the course.

Ms BIRD—So it is not that post graduation you have to do an internship?

Mr Bradford—No. You are still an undergraduate. There are all sorts of issues around what I am suggesting about finding some way of paying them. From the point of view of attracting people into this profession, it is always significant that they have to give up, in this case, three,

four or maybe more years of potential earnings in order to be part of it. The longer we delay their capacity to earn some income, the more difficult we make it. I am not sure how that would work but I would like to see that given some thought, not just about how teachers could be given status and remuneration but also the student teachers who are at that point.

Ms BIRD—We have got the wrong house of parliament here for that.

Mr Bradford—We are doing similar sorts of things for trades to attract people into apprenticeships.

Mr McAlpine—If I could offer a view of the three questions you have asked: for me those questions have underpinning assumptions about the model and they are predicated almost on continuation, refinement or enhancement of the existing model.

Ms BIRD—That is where there have come from.

Mr SAWFORD—That is why I asked.

Mr McAlpine—What we have presented today is a different paradigm that does not require those questions to be asked.

Mr SAWFORD—I could have added a fourth criterion, seeing as none of you have mentioned the word 'research'—not even once, you naughty people!

Mr Bradford—With due respect, I did not mention the word 'research' but I did talk about the reciprocal relationship between the teacher and the academic institution, in this case Central Queensland University. We touched briefly on the Master of Learning Management. Without getting into that in too much detail, that is a way of encouraging teachers to go beyond that kind of paradox which I think exists in Education Queensland in particular. I have not experienced it in other systems. It is as though you finish your teacher training and then you come out to be a sort of tradesperson. There is not any general recognition by way of promotion or anything else that recognises higher degrees. I think this is a way of breaking it. It does not provide people with any more remuneration but it certainly provides them with a sense of professional involvement which is based on the connection back into the university. To have the number—which somebody mentioned earlier today—of teachers in this part of the world who are doing their masters degree is phenomenal. It is amazing to see it, and most of them are people who have been teaching for many years.

Mr McAlpine—The MLM program and the areas of research that teachers have chosen as research—

CHAIR—We will conclude the session. We are over time. Thank you very much.

Proceedings suspended from 1.05 pm to 1.40 pm

BISS, Mrs Isabelle, Central Queensland University, Noosa

GRAY, Mrs Patricia (Trish), Learning Manager, Head of Curriculum and Acting Deputy Principal, Tewantin State School, Education Queensland; Central Queensland University, Noosa

McDONALD, Ms Kate, Year 1 Classroom Teacher, Tewantin State School; Central Queensland University, Noosa

O'SULLIVAN, Ms Kim, Year 1 Classroom Teacher, Tewantin State School; Central Queensland University, Noosa

WISE, Mrs Heidi, Year 5 Classroom Teacher, Tewantin State School; Central Queensland University, Noosa

CHAIR—I welcome our BLM graduates from Central Queensland University, Noosa. You are the reason we are here, ensuring we are training well-equipped teachers. Thank you for appearing before the committee. I remind you that this committee hearing is actually a formal proceeding of the parliament and that your comments are being recorded in *Hansard*. Is there any additional information that you would like to give us at this stage?

Mrs Gray—These ladies were students whom I coordinated when they were at this school. Now I am the administrator supervising them in the school.

CHAIR—Would our graduates care to make an address to the committee?

Mrs Wise—We will go through our experiences. Is that what you would like us to talk about?

CHAIR—Yes.

Mrs Wise—Basically, I got into the course because I have always been fond of children, working with them and seeing them develop and grow. That is pretty much my background. I decided to go with the BLM program mainly, first of all, because of the location. I lived on the Sunshine Coast throughout my teenage years, and the location was probably the first thing that attracted me to it because it was local and it involved local schools. I have always wanted to stay on the Sunshine Coast, to live here and work here. Then I found out that, not only that, it was a really modern approach to teaching. I thought, 'That sounds really great.' That is pretty much how I got into it.

Ms O'Sullivan—I came from a professional sporting background. I then move to coaching and worked a lot in child care. I wanted to take the next step and that for me was doing a teacher education course. I heard through word of mouth about the course at Pomona. I changed my preferences to go there because, again, I was a local. I have lived on the Sunshine Coast for quite a few years. That is why I enrolled for the BLM at Pomona. Throughout the BLM course, I attended four different prac schools. One of those was at Sunshine Beach. The others were Jones Hill, Gympie and Pacific Paradise. I did my internship here at Tewantin. I finished the BLM

course in 2003. Last year, 2004, I gained a permanent position here at Tewantin State School with a grade 1 and 2 class. Currently I am with a grade 1 class, again, here at Tewantin State School.

Ms McDonald—I am also from the coast. I found it quite convenient that there was a new course coming up. I started off in child care but wanted to take that extra step into teaching. Throughout my time at university I have worked at Sunshine Beach State School, Yandina, Bli Bli and Tewantin. I have just finished my final prac and I am in my first day of teaching today.

CHAIR—Congratulations!

Mrs Biss—As a young person I had wanted to get into teaching but, moving to the coast, similar to the others, I did not like the idea of probably having to travel back to Brisbane. So when this course became available I was really keen, even though some people might have looked at me and said, 'Why would you do it at your age?' I still felt I had an awful lot to offer. I went along to the course not really knowing what to expect. I probably knew a little bit but I did not know exactly what to expect. I absolutely loved it. I got right on board with it. I graduated at the end of last year. For the first six months of this year I have been doing supply teaching in our local schools. That has been a great experience; I have really enjoyed it. Like Kate, this is my second day here at the school and my first day of teaching. I am now employed full time here at Tewantin.

CHAIR—What things did you like about the course and what things did you perhaps not like quite so much?

Ms O'Sullivan—Of the things I liked about the course, the big bonus was being in the schools from the first year—close to the first weeks—of university, making that link so that what we are doing at the university aligns with the schools, and building relationships with the students that you are at university with and taking that along to the schools. It is great that, at each school that I have been to, I have been welcomed and made to feel like I was part of the staff and on an equal level, as far as the way we were spoken to and treated. We were able to access all the support staff within a school. Just being in there and being able to work with the children, which is the goal that you want and why I enrolled in the course, from the first year was a huge bonus for me.

Also, the lecturers were practising professionals, so you knew that you could approach them with any questions you had to do with either the school or the university and that the information you were getting from them was current and valuable. That was another bonus.

Forming those networks and partnerships with the students at uni and within the schools was a big thing. We were told that that was a good thing to do and to go and do it—and it is. Part of our work now is managing these children's learning, so it is not just me; there is a whole support staff within a school and a community. You are doing that from the beginning, so when you come into your position it is not a challenge as such—you are familiar with that. I guess one of the dislikes would be the workload!

Mrs Wise—That is the same anywhere, really.

Ms O'Sullivan—Yes, that is just one of those things. Maybe those networks and partnerships at university, working with students that whole time, was probably a challenge for me because the time that we were at uni was spent on lectures or underpinnings. Everyone lived quite locally, so you would just go home. It was a matter of making times that suited everyone, looking at everyone's needs and the days that they were at schools. That was probably the biggest challenge as such. As it sounds, I pretty much enjoyed my experience.

Mrs Wise—One of my favourite things was the fact that we were actually in a school setting. Previously, I had gone to Sunshine Coast university, with all the big buildings, getting lost and not really feeling like the lecturers knew me—those sorts of things. So what I liked about it best was that it was like a little community that we were in and we were made to feel welcome within that school. We were walking around the school and the high school students were walking around the school as well. It all fit in together like that.

All the prac is probably the biggest thing that we all agree on. We were all in a school in our first year. That way you can really decipher whether this is something for you or not. Being at uni and being in a classroom are two separate things. So probably the biggest thing that I enjoyed was having enough prac to make me feel that, the day I walked into my class, I was ready to go and felt like I knew it—it was all there ready for me.

Also, the assignments were really practical. They linked in well with what teachers were doing here and at other schools as well. We were not just doing assignments for the sake of doing them. Even to this day, I still use some of the things I did for my assignments at university in the classroom. That side of it is really good, because we can now see the benefit of doing those assignments. I did not see how some of the assignments I did at Sunshine Coast university linked in with other things. I was in business, though, so it was different. This is a modern course. It was up to date. It involved technology and knowing the kids and the learners. It taught us to understand what our learners are, who they are and what they like. All those sorts of things are what I enjoyed best about the course. The community feeling was the biggest thing, along with the prac.

Ms McDonald—I recently finished my studies. Kim was my practical teacher in my last internship. Not only has she trained as a learning manager but she was my mentor in my training to become one. We had a lot of connection there. She knew exactly where I was coming from and I knew where she was coming from, as well. We had a really positive relationship.

Mrs Biss—Speaking about the course, a lot of what the other girls have already said would go for me as well. With the course, the very practical everyday things that you were learning were good. A lot of what I learnt was already inside of me in some way. It was good to have that reinforced. But it was also the way it was presented. We did a lot of peer-to-peer tutoring as well. We have wonderful lecturers, but we also did a lot of group work. In that time, we were able to learn a lot from one another. Sometimes you think that you are a bit over it and it is a little bit too much. But the way the whole course was presented meant that I found it really challenging and really enlightening, I suppose, if you want to put it that way.

The experience in the schools goes was wonderful. I was explaining to the girls previously that I know that, if I had not had the connectedness and the relationship here with the school and with my supervising teacher, my final year—which was last year—would have been a struggle

for me. I had family issues. If I had not been in a school from day one, from the beginning of the year to the point when that family issue became fairly strong, I do not know how I would have got through the year. Networking, not only with my teacher but with Trish Gray and our guidance officer, helped. That happened because I already had that relationship of being here at the school.

As far as dislikes go, I do not know. I cannot really pinpoint anything. But I suppose for everyone it is hard doing assignments and all that sort of thing. But I do not even think I would class that as a dislike. It is just the challenge, I suppose.

Mr SAWFORD—Would you like to comment about your beliefs about education before you entered this course, how they developed through it and what they are like now?

Ms O'Sullivan—Personally, coming from a sporting background where you always had that coach figure—even though it was not a teacher—my beliefs on education before university included the fact that I valued teachers as role models and mentors and people who you can learn from. I guess that is something that I had been given throughout my younger years and it is something that I probably wanted to share. Throughout university we were told about the learning journey. It is a learning journey. My beliefs on education have changed and are still changing. There is maybe not a total change, but they are growing—particularly regarding the role of a teacher and the ongoing role of learning for them. Because I have finished the university degree does not mean that I know what I need to know. It is that ongoing journey.

The cohorts that you are working with are also evolving. The family make-up is evolving and the socioeconomic issues et cetera are all changing, so obviously the role of a learning manager or teaching is changing. My beliefs now are still about being a role model and about keeping up with where the children are at. That will change from year to year as well. Today I have a new student who has enrolled and who is in my class, so obviously I have to take into consideration their background and where they are coming from and change my teaching to suit them as well as the whole class.

It is about trying to model the love of learning I have to the children's needs and about valuing education. My role is not to say: 'This is everything you need to know. This is the content.' I am not here to fill up those little minds; that is not it at all. It is more about the love of learning, wanting to learn, curiosity and where to find information, because there is not always a teacher with children and they do not only learn in the classroom or on the oval with me. It is something that always happens and hopefully will keep happening throughout their lives and not just at school.

Ms McDonald—My thoughts on education before I started this course were from a student's point of view, because I went from being a student in a high school to being a student at university. Once I decided what my career path was going to be, I looked back on my years of study and thought about the teachers I had had over the years. I thought about the good aspects and the bad aspects and about who I classified as a good teacher. I took on board all those ideas and made myself become the teacher that I would have wanted when I was a child.

Mr SAWFORD—What were some of those ideas?

Ms McDonald—In the early childhood sector, they include being very caring and understanding; as Kim said, being a role model; and treating each child as an individual and looking at their individual learning needs. Like Kim said, we should make learning fun and let them want to learn and seek information if they want to find things out.

Mrs Wise—I had always thought that the teacher was the one in control, the boss. That is how I came into the course, and the course actually changed my mind on that. As we say, we are learning managers. We manage the children's learning. My job is not just to be a teacher. The course showed us that we have to be mentors. We have to teach, obviously, but that is not our only job. That is what I really got out of the course. The teacher needs to have control of the class, but they are not the one in control; each individual child is in control of their learning and progress and whether they are going to continue along the path of lifelong learning. I changed my mind and my thinking about it through that path.

Mrs Biss—As a parent, it has been interesting for me, having watched my three children go through school and having watched the way their education was going. It was always very positive but, as a parent, you can see things from the other side of the fence. We have thoughts and attitudes about what we might expect from a teacher. I always felt that they were very positive times for my children but, at the same time, going into the course—and, as I said before, because the world is changing so much this is difficult to put into words—I could see just from watching my youngest son come through school how much things are changing. As Kate says, we really do need to look at the children as individuals. I am not saying that teachers have not done that, but the world is such a changing place and we need to stay relevant as teachers and learning managers. We need to make sure that we are up to date.

I would have to say, having now been on this side of it, that I have really learnt to understand the heart of the teacher. That has been very interesting for me. As a parent sometimes we can think that teachers are just doing a job, but probably one of the biggest things I have seen is that teachers do really care about the children and they do really want the very best for these students. So I suppose for me my challenge in my career is to make sure I stay as relevant and as up to date as I possibly can.

Mr SAWFORD—An increasing number of children in Australia are being brought up by grandparents How would you convince me, as a grumpy old grandparent with a beautiful little grand-daughter, that I should put my grandchild in your care?

Mrs Wise—I actually have a situation in my class at the moment where the only family source for one of my children is her grandmother. I do not see that to be any different from someone having a father or a mother. Given that we have so many different family situations these days, I consider that child to be the same as everyone else.

Mr SAWFORD—I am not asking that. What I am asking is in these terms: I do not have a job other than my job of bringing up the grandchild, so I have got plenty of time to choose the most appropriate school and, hopefully, the most appropriate teacher. I am a little bit more concerned than others. I am not a hassled parent having to worry about work and so on. I want you to sell me on this. How do you do that?

Mrs Wise—In the course we have the latest experience and knowledge that has come out. The biggest thing is that the course is so student focused; it is not really teacher centred. What we have learnt is that, first of all, we need to know our learner—and we have gone through eight learning management questions. It is all about the learner and how we can best cater for their needs, their learning, their growth and their home situations. It is how to help them out the best we can. Those eight learning management questions pretty much give us the knowledge that we need in order to progress them on their path.

Ms O'Sullivan—I think that you as the grandparent, having been invited into the classroom with your grand-daughter, will see in the classroom the roles that have developed with the children that have already been in the class, the relationships that they have built up, the way that the class functions and the way in which we speak to the children. I think you will see what you need to see there. I know each person has their own values and likes and dislikes, but I definitely know—and this is backing up Heidi—that the course has prepared us well for the future world and how it is evolving. You can say what you like but you will not know until you have come to see it. Coming to see it provides the real proof.

Ms McDonald—I totally agree with what Kim is saying. If you want to find out what kind of teachers we are, how we teach and how we will cater for your grand-daughter, the best thing to do is to come in and see us in action and see how we work with the other children.

Mr SAWFORD—Isabelle, can you top that?

Mrs Biss—No, probably not. I would totally agree.

Ms BIRD—The thing that I find really interesting about your responses to Rod's questions is that you actually talk in the language and reflect the learning values that we have been told the course delivers. The interesting thing that I have noted, from what we have found out about the course this morning, is the course's commitment to the skill of teaching and managing a learning experience and its commitment to ongoing lifelong learning. Every word that every one of you has just uttered has reflected quite naturally both the attitudes and the commitments that we have been told the course delivers—and that is a real test for courses at university training level. We were told that it is built on the idea of going out and doing, not just learning the theory or attitudes. You reflect that very strongly, which is very encouraging to see.

The question I would like to ask each of you relates to the experiences of other students who went through with you but are not here. I understand that there is a fairly high drop-out rate in the first year because one of the advantages is that you get straight into the classroom and people are able to identify quite early on if it is really not for them. Perhaps you might like to provide some feedback to us about their experiences. Do you think that was a valuable thing? I notice you are all women. Did many men go through the year with you? Do you have any reflections to make on that aspect of it as well?

Mrs Wise—Kim and I went through together. We were the first cohort going through. It is interesting now to see other people come through. About five males started with us but a couple dropped out so through our three years we did not experience many males. From my understanding the course is attracting more males, and my husband has just started this year. I was interested to see how many males there were starting with him. I think he said probably

about a quarter or so were males. He has just started back this week. It was also interesting to see their drop-out rate compared with ours. When we went through there were about 50 or so students entering and close to 40 graduated. Starting with such a small number it is a bit hard for us to judge. Now that they are into the bigger numbers it is interesting to find out what the drop-out rates are.

Ms BIRD—Heidi, does your husband provide some insight into why the men are now being attracted to the course? Is it something about the course itself?

Mrs Wise—Yes, I think so. When Kim and I started a lot of people did not know what it was about. We had heard about this great new teaching course available but that is about as much as we knew. It was not until we actually started our lectures and going into schools that we began to understand the process. It is interesting to hear him now saying that the men are coming back and saying, 'We did this today and learnt this at school,' and things like that.

Ms BIRD—Does he provide feedback on what the other fellows say?

Mrs Wise—Yes, he does. We have had so much exposure, especially being on the Sunshine Coast. You can go to many of the local schools now and they have all heard about it and are interested in it. There are so many more students now and a lot more schools have had to come in to take on the supervising roles and things like that. He gives me lots of feedback. He is a bit like Kim: he started off with coaching and working with children through a sporting program and stuff like that. That has really helped him get into the course.

Mrs Biss—As far as attracting males goes—and maybe more work needs to be done in that area—because it is a small community, word of mouth is such a big thing. There is an excitement about the whole course. I have encouraged people to do the course and some are doing it this year, and a couple of those are males. There seems to be an air of excitement about it. It is such a local, hands-on thing, especially for those of us in this particular area, that I can see why it has probably attracted males. Once they are in that course, as Heidi was saying, it probably does appeal a lot more to a male. They feel more that they are training rather than that teacher concept. I do not really know; I cannot speak for the males.

Ms BIRD—You and Kate went through in a different year to Kim and Heidi—is that right?

Ms McDonald—Yes. I actually started off with Kim and Heidi in the first intake, but I had to leave due to personal circumstances. But I was just going to say that the university was really supportive during that time for me and I was able to go away and then come back and finish my studies. So they are quite flexible and they work to suit your needs as well.

Ms BIRD—Were there a number of men going through when you went through?

Ms McDonald—As Heidi said, there were probably about five, with three remaining. But there have been more who have graduated since that time. Out of that group of men, some may have taken more than the three years to graduate.

Ms BIRD—I was wondering if the more practical and focused nature of the course engages them more.

Mrs Gray—We were going to have another one of our graduates, Peter McGeechan, on this panel here this afternoon, but unfortunately he was unable to join us today and Isabelle kindly stepped in in his place. Peter was our school groundsman. He got wind of the BLM and thought, 'This is doable; I like the sound of this,' and he graduated at the end of last year. He is now a permanent teacher on staff here with us. He has said to me that when he saw that it was doable—and we never once doubted that Peter had the intelligence to do it—it was the 'doable' that appealed to him. It had the practical aspects of being out there in schools and doing it, not being in a building and listening to someone talking about the theories of doing it. He has certainly been a bit of a celebrity around here lately and has made the front page of the local media as the groundsman turned teacher through the BLM course.

Ms BIRD—That is a great model to get more men in, isn't it?

Mrs Gray—It is fantastic. As far as numbers of males go, I have noticed that 10 to 15 per cent of my lecture groups out there are male. We would love to see more males in there, but why they are not there is a whole new inquiry, I think. We do not want to have males in there as token males, and we do not want to have males in there who are not suited to it, because that would affect the drop-out rate. We want to see if there is more we can do, but what we are ultimately trying to do is to get the best people in there working with the kids, be they male or female.

Ms LIVERMORE—I am really getting a lot out of this session, so thank you very much for sharing your experiences with us. It seems from what you are saying that all your experience within schools has been within schools that have signed up to the BLM program. Do you have any anxiety about going outside of that environment, going out to other schools in other parts of Queensland, perhaps, where you might be the odd one out, with your experience?

Mrs Wise—Kim and I are up for transfers at the moment. Yes and no. For me, it is more the personal side of things—not being in my comfort zone on the Sunshine Coast. From that point of view, yes, but in terms of teaching, not so much. I feel I have enough skills at the moment to teach any group of children, whatever backgrounds they come from. Not really for me, no.

Ms O'Sullivan—We had this conversation earlier today, so it is funny that it has come up again. I have applied to leave the Sunshine Coast next year and, as far as being in the classroom goes, that is not a concern at all. I may have concern with the staff or the school I may be at. I have no idea. I look at it as an opportunity and a challenge to be that product of change. I do not know whether everyone else will see it like that, but hopefully, by inviting the other staff, the parents and the communities to see what you do in the classroom, they will see it as a positive thing. The ripple effect may be that at the moment on the Sunshine Coast everyone knows of the BLM course. I do not know if they will know of it out west, where I am going, so maybe I will have to answer a lot of questions from people out there. But hopefully it will be seen as a product of change and as keeping up with trends et cetera.

Mrs Wise—Over the three years that we have gone through, and even now in our first and second years of teaching, we have the skills to go about finding information if we do not know something. There will certainly be challenges that come up, but we have the skills and we feel confident in asking and talking to people. It is just a matter of whether they talk back or not. If I do not know something, I will go to as many people as I need to, until I find those answers. That is what we are faced with when we do go somewhere—into a different area that does not know

much about it. Hopefully, we can have an impact on them and also find the information we need when we need it.

Ms LIVERMORE—Perhaps my other question is a bit off the topic, but I am curious: so many students now have to support themselves financially through the course that they are undertaking—did you, your friends or students in the course generally find it hard to marry up with the demands in this course of that prac, where you are working as a teacher for big parts of your course? Does that conflict with part-time jobs and other commitments that students have in order to keep themselves afloat financially?

Mrs Biss—It is definitely not easy, but I think that is life, isn't it? You need to balance those things out. Fortunately, I am in a good situation as I have a very supportive husband, but I watched one of the males with four children to support at home. He was still working in the last year, whereas a lot of us had already decided that we probably were not going to work in that last year. My answer would be that it is not easy but I think that is all part of the challenge. It would certainly be great if we could be paid or if that could somehow be incorporated in that 10-week prac, but it is not easy.

Ms O'Sullivan—I was lucky in that the place where I was doing some part-time or casual work was very flexible, so I was able to say when I could work and that I could not work for the 10-week prac or would just work the Saturday mornings. I was lucky in that way. The workload was heavy, but we did finish a four-year degree in three years, so that has a lot to do with it as well. Some of us were out in the work force and earning the money 12 months earlier as well. I do not have children, so I did not have to worry about that planning. It suited me, so I was happy to do that; it was much better for me.

Ms CORCORAN—Earlier this morning we heard that a lot of BLM graduates in their very first year are taking on either PD work in their new schools or even leadership roles. I do not know whether that applies to any of you. If it does, how do you cope with coming in as a brand new graduate and telling the old hands how to do things? If you have not had that experience, maybe some of your colleagues have.

Mrs Wise—Kim and I are both supervising teachers. I have a second-year student in with me this year. Kim has had the same, although she has had a third year as well. In taking on that role, I was a bit nervous at the start. I was thinking, 'I am qualified to be a teacher, but am I qualified enough to be a mentor to this person who is going through that course?' It has been a wonderful experience so far because it is also keeping me up to date with what is happening at the uni, because things have changed since Kim and I have gone through. I was keeping up to date with what she was doing. It also proved to me that, yes, I can do it; I do have all these skills, they have worked and it has all been worth it. It is showing her what I have done in my time, giving her as much feedback and skills as I can and showing her what the journey looks like at the end, if you get what I mean. That has been really good.

Ms O'Sullivan—Looking at the other side of the coin, as far as being on committees within the school, Heidi and I run a spelling committee and a reporting assessment committee as well. It is a collaborative approach. I can only talk about my experience of this school. It has never been an issue. We have worked together as a team. It has been another learning journey that we have travelled together and that we share with the whole school community, possibly in the form of a

presentation or by keeping them up to date with information. It is never about saying, 'I know more' or 'This is new and this is what you should be doing.' It is a learning journey that you take together—you learn as you go. It has not been intimidating; I have not felt meek and mild about it. It has not been like that. I am speaking about my experience at this school.

Mrs Wise—I had a supervising teacher who is now retired. The things that he taught me were great but I used what I learned from the course and put a modern spin on things. So we are still doing the same sorts of things, but it is more relevant and what we are doing now is probably more like real life to the children. I thought that was interesting. It was great to talk to the older teachers and to find out what they have gone through and what they can teach us as well.

Ms CORCORAN—It is a two-way street.

Mr SAWFORD—We are at the very beginning of this inquiry on teacher education and we would like to thank you for your contribution today. I want to put another question to you. Much of the information that has come to us already and will continue to come to us is very polarised. We have had people arguing about synthesis, people arguing about analysis; people arguing about nurture, people arguing about nature; people arguing about collaboration, people arguing about competition; people arguing about intuition, people arguing about insight; people arguing about presentation, people arguing about organisation; people arguing about feeling, people arguing about logic; people arguing about opinion, people arguing about substance; people arguing about coordination, people arguing against management; people arguing about education and people arguing against learning. You must have come across this. How have you responded to this and how do you think this course has helped to you to respond?

Mrs Biss—To me the phrase, 'Don't throw the baby out with the bathwater' comes to mind. I probably cannot answer that question quickly. I need time to think about it but I think we have freely been encouraged to see, as I was saying before, that education is changing, the world is changing, and we need to be relevant. But, at the same time, there are some wonderful things already happening out there in the education realm, so we cannot just go in and throw things out and assume we have all the new, wonderful things. So that phrase comes to mind. I do not know where I can take it from there but staying relevant is important—and humble is a word I keep thinking of too. As Kim was saying, we are all on a learning journey and, yes, we are going to have differences of opinion and, yes, some people are going to say, 'It's education or it's learning.' We can argue until the cows come home but I think we all have to have that learning ability, that preparedness to have an open attitude, and we all need to see that there are many ways and some of the older ones were great but maybe there are some new ways. I do not know if that answers the question.

Mr SAWFORD—I think it answers it pretty well. Does anybody else want to add to that?

Ms O'Sullivan—As far as my understanding goes, I do not think it was the university's idea to put out a course that was contradicting anything else, that was opposed to anything else or that was saying that whatever else was done was total rubbish. There are many teachers out there who are wonderful, terrific teachers. We are not throwing out everything they know. I think it is just the way the course is delivered, with the practical experience—as opposed to just the theory with a small amount of practical experience—that maybe does not line up. I think that is the major difference. I do not know where the statements are coming from or in what context they

have been said, but from my point of view going through that course helped me learn and continue to learn how to be the best in the role that I am in, whether it is as a year 1 teacher or learning manager, a year 7 teacher or learning manager or a high school teacher or learning manager or whether I decide to take that into adult education. Maybe that has just confused it more; it has confused me a little!

Ms BIRD—I ask a question that does not relate specifically to the nature of the course that you have done: how important do you think it was that you went straight from training into employment? Keeping in mind that many courses do not have an internship—that even if you do a regular amount of prac you may well have only done three or four weeks in a row in a school at any point in time so that you may come out of your training with limited school experience—for the variety of teacher training programs, how important do you think it is that you are straight into the practice, whether it is supply teaching, permanent teaching or whatever?

Ms McDonald—For me, I finished my studies two weeks ago and today is my first teaching day, so it has been a wonderful experience for me to go straight into my employment. It also gives me a sense of achievement, knowing that the teaching and admin staff around me feel that I have the ability to be a good teacher and want me to continue with this school. But I cannot say anything in terms of a person who had to wait for employment, because I have just been given the best opportunity possible, I think.

Ms BIRD—There are others who trained with you; it does not have to be your perspective.

Mrs Biss—I know for myself that if I had not had that supply availability I would have been very frustrated, because you are so ready and so keen. You know that you have come from a prac of 10 weeks where the class is yours—you are the teacher. To then go to nothing would be very frustrating. I was so pleased that I had the experience of the supply, because it took me out of my comfort zone, I think—that is probably what happened for me.

Mrs Wise—I think it is incredibly important to start straight away. Things change so quickly. Even being away for a couple of months, lots of different things are happening, so I think it is crucial to start straight away. Also that way it stays in your head, whereas if you have had six months off it would still be there but you would need a bit of time to get back into it. Just being in a school every day is important. If you are away from it for a little while it has an effect, even just over the holidays. I had to change my thinking again today: 'Oh, okay. I'm back to my routine,' and all that. So I think it is really important to go straight in. As Isabelle was saying, we were so keen to get in and do all these wonderful things. Having to wait could deter you from being ready to go, excited and all that.

Ms BIRD—You lose some of that wonderful—

Mrs Wise—You would get it back, I think, once you did start. We were just very excited when we finished—'Let's just go in!'—to have our own class and to do all these wonderful things that we have learnt with them.

Mrs Gray—There was a question asked earlier today by Ann, I think, of how these new BLM graduates fit in to a school that is full of older, experienced teachers who were trained through a completely different paradigm. I think I can answer that quite well: it is because these students

have had 210 days in a school by the time they finish their course. An average school year has 200 days in it so in their three years that is very significant.

During those times in schools, schools develop an ownership. These are our future teachers. We have an interest in them, a personal interest and a professional interest. One could imagine that there would be the oldies and the new kids on the block but, in this school at least—and I am sure there would be other principals behind me nodding—it does not happen like that, because the existing staff see these people as learners requiring their management skills. Even our non-supervising teachers take on a learning management role for the students of the BLM course in our school. When there is a teacher talking about retirement, staff come to me and to Bob and say, 'When they retire, can such and such be put on in their place?' because these are our people. We are nurturing them, and that is how the partnership empowers us.

Ms BIRD—I find it fascinating that you have this many new teachers. Schools I am familiar with do not turn over teachers for 20 years. That is why I asked the question about the importance of getting straight into the classroom. There is lots of long service leave and supply teaching available. Given what you are describing, and taking a broader professional development view from government's perspective as well as from the perspective of the training providers, the universities, do you think it is important that we try to foster that sort of situation?

Mrs Gray—Yes. I have colleagues who work in universities in Brisbane who are constantly frustrated and anxious about getting their students into prac schools. They cannot find enough prac schools; they cannot find enough classrooms. In Brisbane there are tens of thousands of classrooms and there should be enough for all. But there are not, because of that disillusionment that we talked about at length earlier today. When I describe to them the completely different situation up here, I think they think that I am fabricating it. It is just so far from what they are experiencing that it is unbelievable.

Ms BIRD—I think that it will be nation wide, from what we have seen in our submissions.

CHAIR—Thank you to our graduates for taking the time out of your busy schedules to come and speak with the committee today. We certainly value your views. As Sharon was talking, I was thinking of exactly the point she made. You certainly do reflect in your words the objectives that were quoted to us earlier with regard to the course and what it was attempting to achieve. Congratulations on graduating and on being amongst the new crop of teachers. Thanks for your attendance today.

Resolved (on motion by **Mr Sawford**):

That this committee authorises publication, including publication on the parliamentary database, of the transcript of the evidence given before it at public hearing this day.

Committee adjourned at 2.33 pm