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Education Research and Perspectives

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State Secondary Education in Western Australia 1912–1972

Kaye Tully



Perth Girls' School Prefects

Perth Girls' School was a central school. Its students were not required to wear a school uniform. On the day that the photograph was taken they were asked to wear their best dresses which, in the fashion of the day, were white. Although highly intelligent, most of the girls came from humble homes that did not provide the cultural capital that might have allowed them to win entry to Perth Modern School. [Photo courtesy of Rae Hussey]

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Editorial

As foreshadowed in the previous editorial, this is another special issue of the journal, in this instance, devoted to the growth of secondary education in Western Australia from 1912, when the first government secondary school was established, through to the early 1970s. By then the Dettman Report had been published and the Achievement Certificate had replaced the Junior and Senior Leaving examinations, thus ushering in a new era in the development of mass secondary education.

The author of this study is Dr Kaye Tully, currently an adjunct lecturer in the Graduate School of Education at The University of Western Australia. Dr Tully began her adult career as a primary school teacher. She trained at the Graylands Teachers' College in Perth and spent most of her teaching career in rural schools in Western Australia. Later in life she moved back to Perth and attended Murdoch University, where she completed a bachelor's degree, and later Curtin University of Technology, where she completed an MA and a doctorate. The present study is based on her MA thesis completed in 1993. The setting is Western Australia but many of the issues she raises, especially in relation to the growth of comprehensive schools, are common to many education systems. This is the first major published study of secondary education 'in the west'. For several years Dr Tully was a student of the late Associate Professor Michael White, who was widely regarded as the leading historian of education in Western Australia. Dr Tully is fast assuming his former mantle.

The editors are especially indebted to Ms Kylie Robartson for preparing this issue of *ERP*. The inclusion of a varied array of photographs owes much to her skill and enthusiasm. Given the enhanced responsibilities now carried by Mrs Zan Blair as Faculty Administration Officer, Kylie has fast become an essential member of the production team.

Readers are advised that every effort will be made to publish the June 2003 issue of the journal hard on the heels of this issue.

CLIVE WHITEHEAD

State Secondary Education in Western Australia 1912-1972

Kaye Tully

The University of Western Australia

*'The first duty of the Government is ... to provide
for children in the country'¹.*

Traditionally, the history of State education in Western Australia has been written as the redress of an imbalance in provision between city and country. The unquestioned assumption has always been that country children, because of the dispersion of the population, have been denied their educational due. Yet, with the establishment of the Education Department in 1893, State funds were poured into rural communities. Permanent State schools were provided wherever an average attendance of ten children could be guaranteed. These schools, which were extremely expensive to maintain, were justified by the rubric of agricultural expansion. The unstated corollary of rural expansion is metropolitan neglect. This is particularly so in the area of secondary education. This essay addresses the State's neglect of secondary education in the Perth metropolitan area during the first sixty years of the twentieth century.

Introduction

After the Second World War, the comprehensive high school became part of State education throughout Australia. It was the political solution to an accommodation crisis caused by the post-1945 surge in birth rates and the Commonwealth government's immigration

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policies. In Western Australia, however, the comprehensive high school was also the answer to more than half a century of discrimination against children who happened to live in the Perth-Fremantle metropolitan area. Despite the fact that by 1945 approximately sixty percent of the population was resident in the capital, the government purported to meet their secondary education needs with one small institution—Perth Modern School. Such poverty of provision was not the result of a paucity of demand but rather the product of more than half a century of impecunious government, political ineptitude and a rural gerrymander manifested in the parliament's anti-urban bias.

In theory, Western Australia was ostensibly a model of democracy. By 1899 it had a bi-cameral parliament with fifty seats in the Legislative Assembly and thirty in the Legislative Council. In the same year adult suffrage applied for the first time to lower-house elections. Preferential voting became a reality in 1907 and compulsory voting in 1936. Even that last bastion of conservatism, the Legislative Council, was opened to universal suffrage in 1965.²

As far as State education was concerned, the problem was the Legislative Assembly in which rural interests were predominant. Under-representation of the metropolitan area began with the introduction of responsible government in 1890. In 1922 the Mitchell government institutionalised the practice. It introduced a zonal system that allocated forty two percent of the fifty seats in the Legislative Assembly to the Agricultural Zone, forty two percent to the Mining and Pastoral, Goldfields Central and North West Zones and only twenty four percent to the Metropolitan Zone. To protect the gerrymander any change in the allocation of seats required the application of a formula that valued each non-metropolitan voter as the equivalent of up to six metropolitan voters. As further insurance, any changes proposed by the Electoral Commission required parliamentary approval. Against these odds, by 1948 metropolitan representation stood at forty percent. The movement of people into the metropolitan area, however, did little to alter parliamentary attitudes. In 1959, when faced with a proposed redistribution that was to reduce the number of electorates in the Agricultural Zone, the attorney general

of metropolitan and rural interests in the house was getting 'entirely out of hand'.³

This anti-urban bias was grounded in the land. When gold prospectors began to leave the state at the end of the 1890s and the State lost control of its customs and excise duties to the Commonwealth in 1901, the government tied the Western Australian economy to the plough. Land in the Wheat Belt was opened up and settlers were moved onto new farms as quickly as possible. Isolated and sometimes totally ignorant of farming techniques, these men and women quickly developed an agrarian separatist identity that posited city interests as enemy interests. The rapid rise of the Country Party after 1913 gave these people a powerful political voice both in and out of the parliament. Rural interests became the 'economically, socially and morally pre-eminent' interests of government and the beneficiaries of State largesse.⁴ While an average attendance of eight children secured a non-metropolitan community a provisional school, growing numbers of qualified metropolitan children were denied access to a secondary school. The gerrymander ensured that their metropolitan voices were not heard, at least until the number of electorates in the capital city reached a critical mass in the Legislative Assembly at the end of the 1950s. Then they could no longer be ignored.

Educational administrators coped with the anti-urban environment in different ways. Cyril Jackson, the first professional head of the Western Australian Education Department, used the metropolitan elementary schools to build a Huxleyan ladder from the infant class to the university. His successor, Cecil Andrews, tried to build a fair, equitable and accessible secondary education system and left Perth Modern School as the monument to his failure. The Directors of Education during the 1930s, Wallace Clubb, James Klein and Charles Hadley, sometimes referred to as the three wise men from the east, clung grimly to Andrews' inequitable legacy. The first Western Australian educated Director, Murray Little, had the vision and courage to challenge Andrews' legacy and propose a way out of the morass. His successor, Dr Thomas Robertson, used the administrative skills he acquired in the Army Education Service during the 1939-45 War and in the Commonwealth Office of Education thereafter, to translate Little's

vision into a practical reality—the comprehensive, coeducational community high school.

In a local context, the comprehensive high school represented a step on the way forward out of the political bias, administrative desperation and confusion of the 1930s and the subsequent war years. Metropolitan parents and teachers had long recognised that for the State to maintain five non-selective high schools in country towns and one small competitive-entry high school in the metropolitan area was inequitable. Once Little turned the central schools into high schools and Robertson established community high schools in the suburbs, no government could afford to return to the practice of metropolitan neglect.

By the end of the 1950s, Robert Menzies was firmly ensconced in the Lodge in Canberra and a new Liberal-Country Party government had come to power in Western Australia. Society seemed at last to be overcoming the postwar problems that bedevilled the provision of social services. The free, comprehensive, coeducational, community high school signified a new beginning in secondary education. With the prospect of universal access to high schools, Perth Modern School's selection examination and the inequities it represented were cast aside with hardly a murmur.

This paper traces the emergence of the comprehensive high schools policy from the moment of the State's first involvement in secondary education. The path stretches through economic and political crises, administrative responses, community protests and political provocation. The detail provided is sometimes dense, but justified if the story of secondary education policy in Western Australia is to be given the attention that it has hitherto been denied.

Western Australia's first State secondary school

Western Australia's first adventure into secondary education began four years after the introduction of representative government in 1870. The new Governor, William Robinson, announced that the Colonial Secretary was to introduce a Bill in the Legislative Council enabling the State to subsidise a secondary school for boys. The school was to have a classical curriculum similar to the greater English public schools and enrol students from the 'better classes'. Unlike the English schools he wanted to emulate, however,

the Western Australian institution would not be affiliated with any religious denomination.⁵

The secular provision reflected the isolated and insular character of Western Australian society in 1875. Robinson was convinced that a school without church connections would avoid a recurrence of the sectarian upheaval that accompanied the passage of the 1871 Elementary Education Act through the Legislative Council. The fuss at the time was not about the reintroduction of State aid in the Bill but its intention to limit the clergy's right to give dogmatic instruction in Board schools. Since 1856, when Governor Kennedy abolished State aid and imposed the Irish National Schools model on the General Board of Education, most Protestant communities had patronised Board schools. The Irish curriculum's Scripture lessons and out-of-school instruction by clergy had met their undemanding requirements. If the clergy's right of access was not retained in the Bill, many ministers would feel obliged to open schools at considerable cost to their congregations. The matter was resolved when Sir Frederick Weld, himself a Catholic, restored the *status quo* in Board schools and applied these conditions to State-aided schools. The Bill was passed and State aid returned to the Western Australian education landscape just as the eastern colonies were introducing free, secular and compulsory State education.⁶

Western Australia's population of just 25,000 inhabitants was another factor that affected Robinson's wish for a secular school. In a colony sharply divided by denominational affiliations, he believed a secular school would increase the number of potential students. This was important for to be viable the new school needed to attract the notice of every father who was unable or unwilling to send his sons home to England or to the eastern colonies for secondary schooling. These men were the small pool of senior government officials, merchants, commercial managers, members of the professions, pastoralists and the more affluent farmers who made up the Western Australian Establishment. Together, they influenced the direction of government policy for their own ends. In Robinson's estimation, they could be relied upon to patronise a local school charging moderate fees.⁷

The High School Act of 1875

Robinson informed the Secretary of State Lord Carnarvon that three of his six nominees in the eighteen-member Legislative Council—Henry Hocking, Anthony O'Grady-Lefroy and Malcolm Fraser—influenced the drafting of the High School Act.⁸ The three men were motivated by the collapse of the Church of England Collegiate School and its predecessor Bishop Hale's School, which they believed failed because they were affiliated with the Church of England. The colony, however, still needed a secondary school that offered a classical education to boys of their own social class and, in their opinion, a State-subsidised secular school was best suited for the task. They justified State involvement in the venture as an investment in the colony's future leaders.⁹ A majority of elected members supported the three men in the Council and the High School Bill was passed on 30 December 1875 by a majority of four votes.¹⁰

The case put by the High School's parliamentary opponents was simple. In the Second Reading debate they argued that it was oppressive and unjust to tax the general community for a facility available only to colonists able to pay £12 *per annum* in tuition fees. The funds directed to the High School could better be spent on State schools for those children who still had no access to elementary education.¹¹ Theirs was a forlorn hope for the majority in the Council did not represent the poor, the isolated and the property-less whose children these were. Rather, they were the Establishment acting in its own interest.

Outside the Legislative Council, the loudest criticism came from the press. It argued that to use State funds to subsidise a school for a few privileged boys was inequitable. All the money in the Colonial Treasury available for education needed to be channelled into elementary schools until every child in the colony had access to a basic education. Only after that should the boys' school be considered. At a more pragmatic level it told its readers that as the completion of Standard VII, the final elementary-school grade, was sufficient to qualify a fourteen-year-old boy for entry to the colony's public service, a subsidised secondary school was a waste of the State's resources. Clearly, the idea of an exclusive boys' secondary school was unpopular.¹²

One group, the Roman Catholic Church, was vehemently opposed to the prospect of a State-subsidised secular boys' school. Bishop Martin Griver outlined his criticisms in two memorials, the first to the Legislative Council and the second to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. Both documents pointed out that the High School's proposed secular curriculum contravened the spirit of *The Elementary Education Act of 1871*, which compelled all schools in receipt of government funds to provide religious instruction. They also asserted that to tax Catholics to subsidise a secular secondary school, which in conscience they could not use, would be unjust. This was a reference to the 1864 Papal encyclical *Quanta Cura* and its attached *Syllabus of Errors*, which obliged Roman Catholic parents to educate their children away from the liberal influences of State schools.¹³

The Legislative Council ignored Griver but the Colonial Office reacted with unusual haste to *The High School Act of 1875*, which left on the same mail boat as the second memorial. Carnarvon insisted that Griver's memorial had no weight at all in the Colonial Office but within three months of the passage of the Act he had advised Robinson to disallow it. The grounds for his advice were that the Act failed to propose a curriculum suited to a pioneering colony, failed to specify limits on the government's commitment to the school and failed to distance the Legislative Council from responsibility for the school's administration. Unless rectified, Carnarvon foresaw that these shortcomings would leave the Legislative Council exposed to potential litigation. Accordingly, he advised Robinson to have placed before the Legislative Council a new Bill based on the provisions of the *Queensland Grammar School Act of 1860*.¹⁴

The Queensland legislation allowed voluntary local committees to establish secular, State-subsidised grammar schools with modern and classical subjects in their curricula. Once a committee had raised £1,000 toward the establishment of a school in its community, the Act allowed the government to make a matching grant and appoint a board of governors to manage the school. The school was then entitled to an annual subsidy from the government equal to the amount of fees collected, provided the amount fell between £250 and £500.¹⁵ In the opinion of the Colonial Office, if adopted

in Western Australia the provisions of the Queensland Act would distance the government from the administration of the proposed school.

The higher education for boys act of 1876

Acting on the advice of the Colonial Office, the Western Australian Legislative Council passed *An Act to make provision for the Higher Education for Boys* in September 1876. This Act adopted all but one of the features of the Queensland Act. It specified a curriculum with modern and classical subjects, limited the government's annual subsidy to £500 and provided for a board of governors to be appointed by and be responsible to the colonial governor. Significantly, it omitted the local fund-raising committees because, according to the Attorney General Henry Hocking, the High School was to be an experiment.¹⁶ Experiment or not, without local committees there was no capacity in the Act for rival State-subsidised schools to be established.¹⁷

The Councillors who supported the new institution spelled out their vision for the High School in the Second Reading Debate. George Randell wanted the school to provide boys with 'an education of a higher order than the merely elementary instruction imparted in existing schools'. Hocking declared that the classical curriculum not only defined such an education but also promoted 'a higher standard of intellectual culture' than the vernacular curriculum of the State schools. Affirming the superiority of the classics, James Lee Steere argued that places in the High School should be reserved for boys from socially suitable families with incomes in excess of £150 *per annum*. The Councillors agreed that such families deserved government help to provide something better for their sons than was offered by the existing elementary school curriculum.¹⁸ The High School was to be an unapologetically exclusive institution for the sons of the Establishment.

After the passage of the 1876 Act, press opposition gradually subsided and the Roman Catholic Church withdrew from the fray. As it was obliged to do by *Quanta Cura*, it quickly developed a new set of education priorities. The arrival of additional teaching orders during the 1880s and the adoption of a policy consolidating

resources in larger schools allowed Bishop Griver and his successor Bishop Gibney to lay the foundations for the development of an economically independent school system. It was a strategy that ensured the survival of Catholic education when State-aid to denominational schools was withdrawn again in 1895.¹⁹

Perth High School

Perth High School opened in 1878 with twenty students. It seldom boasted enrolments in excess of sixty during the first decade of its existence but with State support it had no need to compete with the elementary schools for students. When Frederick Faulkner, who was appointed headmaster in 1890, introduced modern subjects to complement the classical curriculum, as the institution's Act required, enrolments grew. Even so, despite an increase in the High School's annual subsidy to £1,000 in 1897, it still did not attract many students from outside its preferred Establishment clientele. The suburban middle class, which became an established part of Western Australian society in the 1890s, preferred to place its sons in elementary schools and the non-subsidised denominational secondary schools that opened in response to the wealth created during the gold rushes.²⁰

Cyril Jackson and the elementary schools

Western Australia's population grew prodigiously following the discovery of gold in the early 1890s. From 47,000 in 1890, it rose to 179,708 at the turn of the century and passed 300,000 a decade later. At the same time, Perth was transformed from a sleepy market town of some 16,700 souls to a thriving city of 92,138 in 1911. The gold that attracted the new population also attracted capital so that the newly responsible government was able to borrow in its own right and invest in economic infrastructure. As a result the telegraph system was extended to link Perth with major centres in Western Australia, the eastern colonies and England. Extensions to the railway system connected Perth with Kalgoorlie and Albany while passing through new wheat-growing districts that the Forrest government was opening up for settlement. The construction of a harbour at Fremantle diverted passengers, cargo and mail from Albany to Perth and created an export hub

for the now substantial wheat harvests. In addition considerable private capital was invested in trading banks, insurance brokerages, retail stores and manufacturing businesses to service the surge of new settlers.²¹ Thus, by the end of the nineteenth century Western Australia had taken on the trappings of a small but modern economy.

Schedule Four

Among the immigrants who flocked to Western Australia from the eastern colonies and Great Britain in search of a new life, there were many middle-class families. The professionals among them applied to the government for legislative recognition of the exclusive associations to which they belonged. With this recognition they were able to raise the qualifications demanded of Western Australians for admission to their groups and, more importantly, they were able to control the number of practitioners working in the state. Accountancy, engineering, surveying and pharmacy bodies worked closely with the staff of the Perth Technical School, established in 1900 as part of the Education Department, to set up courses appropriate to their needs. The post-secondary character of these courses coupled with the new middle class stimulated a demand for secondary education, particularly in science.²²

The Elementary Education Act Amendment Act of 1893, which established the Education Department of Western Australia, introduced a mechanism that allowed the department to address the demand for science education, albeit in a small way. The Revised Programme of Instruction that accompanied the Act added a ninth class, Standard Ex. VII, to the elementary school syllabus. Schedule Four of the Revised Programme listed six additional subjects that could be taught in the new class—domestic economy, mathematics, freehand drawing, animal physiology, French and history—and made provision for other subjects to be added. To encourage teachers to teach these subjects, the Education Department conducted annual Schedule Four examinations, which earned head teachers a grant of 12 shillings for each pass gained by their students.²³

The Schedule Four scheme was not an immediate success. Between 1893 and 1896 the number of candidates presented for examination fell from seventy-eight to seventy.²⁴ It was not until

the man from the London School Board, Cyril Jackson, took up his appointment as Inspector General of Schools in January 1897 that the scheme came into its own.²⁵ With his endorsement the number of examinable subjects and the number of candidates sitting for annual examinations steadily increased. By the end of the fourth year of his administration there were thirteen Schedule Four subjects, more than half of which were science or mathematics related, and 546 examination candidates.²⁶

*A Huxleyan ladder 'reaching from the gutter to the university'*²⁷

Jackson had no immediate wish to involve the Education Department in the direct provision of secondary education. A short time after his arrival, he toured the eastern colonies to familiarise himself with Australian conditions. Among a host of observations, he reported that he found the Fort Street Boys' School in New South Wales 'quite unique, for it ... combined secondary and primary courses ... [with] boys in the upper classes learning French, Latin and Mathematics, and a few even Greek'. Indeed, he could not 'speak too highly of [the school's] tone, of its organization, and of the education given.' But he wondered if the school might not have 'gone beyond its legitimate sphere' as a government school by permitting its students to compete on equal terms with candidates from the independent schools in the University of Sydney's public examinations.²⁸

Jackson shook off this niggling doubt and recruited teachers who had attended the radical Fort Street Boys' School, trained at the Fort Street Normal School and graduated from the University of Sydney. They were to be the key to his mission to improve the quality and scope of elementary education in Western Australia. Once he returned to Perth, Jackson ensured that the best of his recruits found their way to Perth Boys' School, where he encouraged one of them, James Klein, to prepare a group of students for the University of Adelaide's Primary Certificate public examination in 1899.²⁹ From this small beginning, the practice of public examination preparation spread quickly through the State schools.³⁰

George Randell, who was now Minister for Education in the John Forrest government, supported Jackson's attempt to extend the range of elementary education by the introduction of public examination

preparation. He introduced an amendment to the Elementary Education Act in 1898 that enabled the government to provide free education for all students between the ages of six and fourteen. Thereafter, its provisions permitted students to attend school on the payment of a modest fee until reaching the age of sixteen. Beyond this age, attendance was allowed at the discretion of head teachers.³¹ The effect of the amendment was dramatic. The number of elementary school students over the age of fourteen grew from 400 in 1898 to 1,620 in 1902.³² Coupled with the introduction of public examination preparation in State schools, the amendment opened the way for students to work their way through the South Australian examinations and matriculate. In 1902, when Perth Technical School became an affiliated institution of the University of Adelaide,³³ State school students had before them a Huxleyan ladder that rose from the gutters of East Perth to the university. In a society where the Establishment continued to regard elementary education as vernacular instruction for the lower classes, Jackson's achievement in constructing this ladder was truly remarkable.

Cecil Andrews and the establishment of State secondary schooling

Jackson returned to England in 1903, apparently recovered from the health problems that drove him to the antipodes in the first place. Cecil Andrews, who had agreed to come to Western Australia in 1900 as the foundation Principal of the Claremont Teachers' Training College on the understanding that he would be the next Inspector General of Schools, replaced him. When Jackson resigned Andrews was just thirty-four years old and had had little administrative experience. Like Jackson, however, he realised the need to improve the quality and scope of the education available in State schools. Furthermore, the poorly prepared students whom he encountered during his brief stint at the Training College, which opened in February 1902, had left him with a sense of urgency about the task.³⁴

At first, Andrews worked with the ladder that Jackson had constructed. So successful was he that by 1906 State school students were entering the University of Adelaide's examinations at every level as a matter of course. The greatest number of candidates came regularly from the Perth Boys' School and the Perth Girls' School,

which had occupied a common campus in James Street since 1896, when to former moved across town from its old premises in St Georges' Terrace. Names of students from these schools on the pass lists attracted the attention of the Member for Perth, Harry Brown. He realised that the schools were drawing older students from the suburbs and in August 1906 he told the Legislative Assembly that this deprived suburban head teachers of the opportunity to teach Schedule Four subjects and reap the financial reward that passing students would bring. Subsequently, he moved:

That there be laid upon the table a Return giving the names and addresses of scholars attending the James Street School[s], Perth, who reside beyond the municipality.

What he hoped to accomplish by this is unclear. It seems that the motion may have been a ruse for the ensuing debate quickly extended beyond the activities of the James Street schools. Politicians from both sides of the House railed against the Education Department, claiming that it was exceeding its authority by allowing elementary schools to compete with private secondary schools by preparing students for the various public examinations. In the opinion of the Legislative Assembly, secondary education and the privilege of sitting for University of Adelaide public examinations were the right of those children with parents able to afford the fees charged by the private secondary schools. They were not to be made available to metropolitan students while there were children in agricultural districts with no State school to attend.³⁵

Andrews had already raised the matter of the James Street schools' growing involvement in examination preparation early in 1906, when he outlined some of the anomalies created by the amending Acts of 1893 and 1899. He informed the Minister, Frank Wilson, that while the Acts permitted students to remain at school until the age of sixteen and beyond, they failed to make curriculum provision beyond Standard Ex. VII. It was a problem because some students reached this class before their thirteenth birthday. Rather than extend the departmental curriculum and risk the wrath of the parliament for taking the Education Department out of its legitimate sphere of elementary education, Andrews proposed

that the James Street schools be converted into a four-year coeducational, higher-grade school. Six hundred students between the ages of twelve and sixteen could be accommodated comfortably in the existing buildings. The fees for four hundred and fifty would be set at £5 *per annum*, with the remaining places reserved as free places for those metropolitan students already in Standard Ex. VII. Of course the free places would lapse as these students left the school, thus preserving the incentive to take up full-fee places.³⁶

Wilson had no choice but to reject the proposal. Customs and excise had become a Commonwealth power in 1901 and Western Australia lost the right to collect these duties. However, because the state was dependent upon this source of revenue, the constitution allowed collections to be phased out over five years. Consequently, by 1906 revenue from customs and excise had fallen by eighty per cent. To add to the government's economic woes, the wealthy landowners who held sway in the Legislative Council were rejecting all attempts to extend the State's tax base. Until this confrontation was resolved, the government had no alternative but to slash State expenditure.³⁷

Faced with its commitment to establish an apparently endless stream of small schools in new farming districts, the government savaged post-primary education. School fees for students who did not leave school on their fourteenth birthday were doubled and the collection of fees was enforced. As most of these students attended the larger metropolitan schools, it was there that the effects were felt most keenly. The proportion of the annual enrolments over the age of fourteen halved almost immediately and did not return to the 1906 level until 1913, when a Labor government led by John Scaddan made education in State schools free for all students.³⁸

The central schools

Policymaking continued in the face of these hard financial times. It was not Cecil Andrews but the Chief Inspector of Schools James Walton, however, who pursued what became one of the most important innovations in the history of the Western Australian Education Department. The central schools that he institutionalised in 1908 saved the State the cost of developing a selective secondary school system similar to those that developed in the eastern states.

At the end of 1903 the Premier, Walter James, had asked Walton to use part of his long-service leave due in 1905 to investigate overseas trends in secondary education.³⁹ Walton, who was not enamoured of State secondary education, visited schools in Germany, Switzerland, England and the United States of America. Of everything that he saw, the English practice of drafting older elementary school students into central schools for the last two or three years of their education impressed him most.⁴⁰

On his return to Western Australia, Walton urged the government to reserve an elementary school for the 249 students in Standards VI, VII and Ex. VII in the metropolitan area who were not already attending the James Street schools. He argued that such a school would improve the deployment of teachers and reduce the number of multi-grade classes in suburban schools. His main selling point was that the change would be cost neutral and not involve the government in the provision of secondary education.⁴¹ When he was ignored, Walton raised the matter again in his 1907 annual report, recommending the establishment of a number of central schools along the Fremantle to Midland Junction railway line. He hoped that the concentration of older students in these schools would encourage the Education Department to develop a vernacular higher-elementary curriculum, to reassert the difference between elementary and secondary education blurred by Jackson's public examinations policy.⁴² Wilson was impressed by the concept and in October 1907 he permitted Walton to begin planning for the introduction of eight such schools.⁴³

Walton envisaged that each central school would have seven primary classes, from Infants to Standard VI, and two post-primary classes, Standards VII and VIII. Post-primary students would be recruited from the Standard VI class of each central school and from all elementary schools within a three-mile radius. In the metropolitan area, he recommended that Fremantle Boys' School, the Princess May School, Claremont State School, Perth Boys' School, Perth Girls' School and Midland Junction State School be reclassified as central schools. Outside the metropolitan area, he recommended that the Kalgoorlie and Boulder State schools also be reclassified.⁴⁴

Initially, Andrews opposed the establishment of the central schools. He informed Wilson that:

I do not think it would be practicable to attempt to force children to attend schools ... not nearest to ... home unless fares were paid. If this were done, a similar concession would of course be claimed by those who are already voluntarily attending schools at some distance from their homes; for instance, scholars at James Street. The change would thus be a very doubtful economy, and I do not recommend that any steps should be taken in this direction.⁴⁵

But little more than two months later Andrews recommended that Walton's chosen schools be reclassified as central schools. He also indicated that the central schools would involve only a 'trifling' increase in costs. Andrews' change of mind was the result of the now solvent government's inclusion of funds for preliminary work on the Education Department's first high school in the Education Estimates for 1908.⁴⁶

Eight central schools opened at the beginning of the 1909 school year. Attendance was not compulsory, but a new regulation prevented primary schools situated less than three miles from a central school offering classes above Standard VI. This meant that students who completed Standard VI before the age of fourteen and chose to remain in their neighbourhood schools repeated that class until the law permitted them to leave school.⁴⁷ In 1910, a magnanimous Andrews admitted that the central schools had 'resulted in increased efficiency' insofar as enrolments in Standards VII and VIII had increased. Nonetheless, he questioned the educational value of the institution in a system yet to open its first high school. They were, in his opinion, 'anomalous schools' with no specific educational purpose. Their social purpose, however, was obvious. With their own vernacular curriculum the central schools would define the distinction between those children with parents who could afford secondary education and those who could not.⁴⁸

The boys' State secondary school project

Andrews' campaign for the first Education Department high school was hard fought. It began in January 1903 when James reminded the Minister for Education Walter Kingsmill that Perth High School's Board of Governors had complained several times about the dreadful condition of the old military hospital buildings in which

it was housed. He acknowledged the legitimacy of their complaints, but claimed that the school's 'most disappointing' performance was due almost entirely to 'the ineptitude of the governing body'. In his opinion, it had failed to identify and meet the challenge of the state's rapidly changing social and economic structure. As the Premier of Western Australia, a member of the inept Board of Governors and a former student, he considered that the continued existence of such an elitist, government-subsidised school in a democratic society was in every way unjustifiable.⁴⁹

Kingsmill referred the matter to Andrews for an opinion.⁵⁰ Andrews disagreed with James, recommending an overhaul of the High School that involved replacing the military hospital buildings, appointing a 'more energetic' headmaster and paying higher salaries to attract well-qualified assistant teachers. He also pointed out that State intervention in the administration of the school would imply Education Department control of secondary education, something that the Establishment would not find palatable.⁵¹ Wary of accepting the Inspector General's advice, Kingsmill requested information about government provision for secondary education in the other Australian states.⁵²

Before this information arrived, James asked Andrews directly 'if ... [the High School] should be continued as at present or taken over by the State as a secondary school.'⁵³ The new Inspector General told the Premier bluntly that as intelligent government required an intelligent electorate, government involvement in secondary education was essential. More specifically, he maintained that without government secondary schools to produce well-prepared students, Perth Technical School could not turn out the skilled technicians needed to vitalise the state's economy. This being so, he proposed a government high school that would enrol dayboys and boarders from the age of ten. After a two-year preparatory course, students would be drafted into either a classical or a modern stream, the latter concentrating on science and European languages. He estimated that, with yearly tuition fees set at between £10 and £12, the proposed school would cost the government at least £1 500 *per annum* to administer.⁵⁴

James was not satisfied. He complained that the projected school would not differ sufficiently from Perth High School or the existing private secondary schools. Andrews then informed him that while

it would have a similar curriculum, its teachers would use modern teaching methods. Language instruction would focus on oral communication and science would be taught as a practical subject in laboratory classrooms.⁵⁵ James finally accepted that the 'modern' approach was sufficiently different to justify State involvement.

Representatives of the Protestant denominations met with Andrews to express their support for the project. Canon Lefroy and the Reverend Gray informed the Inspector General that the Church of England and the Presbyterians wished to establish boarding houses for country students in conjunction with the new school. After the meeting Andrews reported that:

the Methodists and Baptists would like to do the same. The Church of England and the Methodists were both proposing to start Secondary Schools of their own ... but now proposed to abandon these. Scotch College was intending to erect new buildings at Claremont, but is now prepared to disappear altogether.⁵⁶

A subsequent meeting of metropolitan clergy, chaired by the Anglican Bishop of Perth, Charles Riley, with representative from Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian, Congregational and Baptist churches and the Perth Hebrew Congregation confirmed the agreements reached at the first meeting. However, it refused to condone godless boarding houses operated by the State. Denominational boarding houses were a way around this problem and, more importantly, an acceptable saving to those already struggling to establish their own secondary schools.⁵⁷

James recognised that Protestant acceptance of the proposed school provided an opportunity for the State to divest itself of Perth High School. Grasping the initiative, he informed the chair of the Board of Governors Winthrop Hackett that the new school would supersede Perth High School.⁵⁸irate, Hackett confronted James with a deputation that included Frederick Faulkner, Sir James Lee Steere and Dr Athelstan Saw. Lee Steere and Saw were Legislative Councillors, governors of the school and, like Hackett, owned substantial city and country properties. The three men demanded State funding for new school buildings and informed James that if his government could be persuaded to make these funds available the proposed school would be politically unjustifiable.

Unruffled, James told the deputation that the High School's subsidy would probably be withdrawn when the new boys' secondary school opened. If this occurred the government would honour all the High School's legal and moral obligations, provided it closed its doors and handed its assets to the State.⁵⁹ James then arranged for preliminary funding for the new school to be included in the 1903 Education Estimates.⁶⁰ More cautious than their leader, Cabinet voted to withdraw the matter from its agenda pending receipt of the report of the Royal Commission inquiring into government education in New South Wales.⁶¹

After the election in August 1904, whilst still waiting for the New South Wales report, James lost a vote of no confidence moved by the leader of the Labor Party Henry Daglish. James' defeat marked the end of the boys' State secondary school project. Before the New South Wales report arrived in December 1904, he resigned from parliament and took up an appointment as the Western Australian Agent General in London. Daglish, who succeeded him, was the state's first Labor premier. Faced with the State's dwindling customs and excise revenues, he put aside the secondary school proposal.⁶²

The Normal School

With James' departure, Andrews grasped the secondary education initiative. Early in 1903 he had established classes in a hall in Hay Street in Perth for the monitors attached to State schools in the metropolitan area. These young people spent half their time attending class and half assisting in State schools. In 1905 Andrews shifted the classes from Hay Street to a building adjoining Perth Boys' School. When this reorganisation was unopposed, he moved the monitors into alternative accommodation and annexed the building to establish a coeducational Normal School.

The Normal School, which opened in 1907, provided a two-year full-time course to sixty of the best applicants for monitorships. At the end of the second year the students sat for the University of Adelaide's Senior Certificate examination.⁶³ An academic course of this nature was undoubtedly secondary education, making the Normal School the Education Department's first secondary school. The fact that it was a specialised school meant, however, that

it could not easily be extended to incorporate non-monitorial students without triggering the attention of parliament.

A modern State high school

The Normal School fell well short of the type of State secondary schools that Andrews wanted to establish. He outlined his case for these schools with the support of his minister Frank Wilson in 1906. At the core of his argument was the still novel notion in Western Australia of secondary education as a bridge between primary schooling and tertiary education. Even more radical was Andrews' assumption that State secondary schools should prepare significant numbers of students for entry to tertiary education. He maintained that State high schools with modern curricula were essential for the economic development of Western Australia's economy. They would improve the quality of Education Department teachers, relieve the Technical School of the need to provide prerequisite preparatory classes in science and mathematics for most beginning students and provide a sufficient number of matriculants to make a State university possible. Only if these conditions were met by the education system would agriculture, mining and secondary industries have an adequate supply of technicians and scientists.⁶⁴ His argument challenged the stated view of Perth High School's supporters and the members of parliament who saw secondary education as a superior form of education suitable only for a social elite.

Andrews argued his case from the experience of Germany and the United States of America, where technical and university education followed the completion of secondary schooling. He pointedly criticised the short-sightedness of the Western Australian government for establishing the Perth Technical School without first providing secondary schools, stating that:

[while the] Technical Education of countries like Germany and the United States is often held up to admiration, ... it appears to be thought that all that is needed in order to attain the same success is the establishment of technical schools. The fact is often overlooked that the Higher Technical Schools upon which Germany has lavished money with such signal success, and the great institutions which American millionaires

have endowed so liberally require the completion of a course in a Secondary School as a preliminary condition of entrance.

Unless the government established sufficient secondary schools with 'low fees and many free places' to enable students to complete a general high school education before proceeding to specialised training, it was his opinion that Western Australia would never have an effective education system.⁶⁵

In 1907, with the first Education Department high school as his goal, Andrews prepared a set of proposals for Cabinet. In the best public administration tradition, he suggested three alternatives, two of which the government had already rejected. The first was for a boys' secondary school similar to his 1903 proposal, the second for a coeducational high school in the James Street buildings similar to his 1906 proposal and the third for a coeducational school in new buildings to be constructed on a site in Thomas Street previously reserved for a technical school. Cabinet accepted the third option in July and approved the finance for preliminary works in February 1908.⁶⁶

As the owner of the state's premier daily newspaper, *The West Australian*, Winthrop Hackett pilloried the projected high school as a reversal of 'that tradition of economy and cautious management which has been, happily, the keynote of the Education Department from its earliest days.'⁶⁷ His attack had two prongs. He contended that the proposed new school threatened the State's economic welfare since it would be the first of many such schools. By diverting funds from the construction and maintenance of elementary schools in agricultural districts, State high schools would discourage potential farmers. His criticism was a reference to the Newton Moore government's commitment to agricultural production. Hackett's second prong was a nasty blow aimed at Andrews' professionalism and stewardship of the Education Department. He claimed that the Inspector General's 'assumption' that the State needed another secondary school while Perth High School was 'far from full' was wrong. In Hackett's opinion, education in Western Australia would be better served if the funds for a high school were committed to the establishment of a State university to benefit the boys who were already matriculating from private secondary schools.⁶⁸

Andrews answered Hackett in a memorandum to the Minister, which fell into the hands of the press. To Andrews' credit, he avoided any personal references in the document. He repeated earlier calls for the primacy of science in the curriculum, pointing out that State high schools would increase the numbers of secondary-school students studying science. Enrolments in science courses at Perth Technical School and in the science faculty of the proposed university⁶⁹ would grow and eventually make available the scientists and technologists needed to invigorate the state's economy. To provide the facilities needed to make this outcome possible, he suggested that the State could either build its own secondary schools or subsidise science education in private secondary schools at the of risk of reviving the politically volatile issue of State aid, which was a feature of electoral politics in the early 1890s.⁷⁰

The spectre of State aid, however, could not be invoked to resolve the issue of Perth High School. At Wilson's behest, Andrews discussed the School's future with Sir Walter James, who had accepted re-appointment to the Board of Governors after his return from London.⁷¹ According to Andrews, the two men decided that a coeducational State high school and Perth High School could co-exist, provided a scheme was devised to make the High School a financially and educationally viable institution.⁷² Andrews' solution involved a radical reconstitution of the High School's Board of Governors. He wanted a new body consisting of the Minister for Education, the Inspector General of Schools, the Director of Technical Education and 'perhaps three others' to take over the school. Subject to the existing Board's approval, he also recommended that the government make loans available to the High School to build on land reserved by the government in Havelock Street in West Perth.⁷³ Inevitably, the Governors rejected Andrews' proposal and asked the government's permission to sell the school site at the west-end of St George's Terrace. The government refused and the issue of the High School lapsed.⁷⁴

Not to be denied, Andrews ploughed on. His campaign entered a new phase in July 1908, when the Education Department's 1907 report was tabled in the Legislative Assembly. 'A Note on Secondary Education' written by Andrews for Wilson was attached as an addendum. As well as the case for the primacy

of science, the argument in the 'Note' contended that as Perth High School and the private secondary schools had made inadequate provision for science subjects, they were failing to prepare their students to participate in the Western Australian economy. He suggested that there were three courses of action open to the government to provide more science education. It could subsidise the existing independent secondary schools, add secondary sections to its larger elementary schools or provide an 'entirely new secondary school, of a different type from those already existing' in the private sector. As Andrews had stated earlier, was impossible. The second was impracticable as the larger metropolitan government schools were already overcrowded. The only option possible was for the government to establish modern State secondary schools.⁷⁵

The West Australian published the 'Note' in full on 24 July 1908. Four days later in an editorial Hackett subjected Andrews to a blistering personal attack. He admitted that few private secondary school students studied science subjects, but maintained that Andrews was wrong when he said that these subjects formed part of secondary education. Real secondary education dealt only 'with dead and living languages, with literature, with advanced history, with a certain amount of mathematics, and the like'. To describe a science course as secondary education was, he believed, to demonstrate 'a maimed and mutilated' notion of the matter. Hackett took particular exception to Andrews' interpretation of secondary education as a link between elementary education and the Perth Technical School. As entry to the Technical School did not require enrolling students to have secondary school qualifications, the path from elementary to technical education was open to State school students. Hackett wanted a separate path to tertiary education for private school students. In his opinion, to establish the Education Department's first high school before opening a State university would discriminate against private school students.⁷⁶

As well as reflecting Hackett's persistent advocacy for a State-subsidised university, the editorial illustrated the durability of the view that saw secondary education as the purview of the Establishment and its friends. Clearly, the problem of protecting the existence of the private schools lay beneath the vexed issue of the place of science in the high school

curriculum. Modern science teaching required expensive facilities. For Hackett, adherence to two distinct pathways, one from State elementary schools to State technical schools, the science path, and the other from private secondary schools to a State-subsidised university, the humanities path, provided the necessary defence. Anything other than parallel paths challenged the social order upon which he perceived Western Australian society to rest.

The Secondary Schools' Association, which comprised the headmasters of Scotch College, Christian Brothers' College, Guildford Grammar School and Perth High School, supported Hackett. Like him, the Association rejected science as part of secondary education because their parents were not 'of a class' that demanded such subjects. These keepers of curriculum propriety in Western Australian education also claimed that the establishment of just one State high school would be an extravagant waste of taxpayers' money. Unsatisfied demand for legitimate secondary education could be met simply by adding to the number of government scholarships that were already tenable in Association schools. The money saved in this way could then be channelled into the establishment of a university to cater for matriculants from their schools.⁷⁷

Faulkner, who had been headmaster of Perth High School for eighteen years, attacked the notion of State secondary schooling in his Speech Day address in 1908. He pleaded for the retention of the existing relationship between the Education Department's elementary schools and the High School, which he believed worked efficiently while Cyril Jackson was Inspector General because Jackson respected the social division it expressed. In Faulkner's view, all that was needed to maintain a well-balanced education system in Western Australia was for Andrews to demonstrate the same respect.⁷⁸ Faulkner's associate, Anderson of Scotch College, was also upset. When appearing before the Presbyterian General Assembly in November 1908, he claimed that Andrews' plan to enter the field of secondary education was part of an insidious Labor Party plot to lower social standards. Unless the Education Department was forced to restrict its provision to elementary education, he felt the social fabric of Western Australian society would change for the worse.⁷⁹ It is obvious that the Secondary Schools' Association feared the prospect of State secondary

education for its schools did not have the resources to compete with the stream of State high schools that they expected would follow the first such institution.

During the Second Reading Debate on the 1909-1910 Education Estimates, members from both sides of the Assembly opposed the Education Department's formal entry into secondary education. They were concerned primarily about the effects they imagined the proposed school would have on the state's economy. In essence, their argument asserted that as Western Australia was dependent on its primary industries, secondary education was irrelevant. Students needed practical farming, forestry and mining skills, not abstract scientific knowledge. This being so, the money for a metropolitan high school would be better spent in agricultural and mining districts to provide schools for the children of productive workers, not unproductive city people.⁸⁰ The notion of urban residents as non-productive parasites sucking the life out of good, hard-working rural folk was already well developed in the parliament.

Wilson gave Andrews the opportunity to reply to his critics. In two memoranda, which also found their way to the press, Andrews' defended the Education Department's formal entry into secondary education. In summary, the documents pointed out that it was irrelevant whether or not private school head teachers or the parents who patronised their schools regarded science subjects as suitable for inclusion in the secondary school curriculum. For Western Australia to have the trained personnel it needed to support the economy, secondary education had to include a range of science subjects. Neither the University nor the Perth Technical College would succeed in providing the scientists and technicians that the state needed without an adequate supply of science matriculants. The Association schools did not have the enrolments or the resources to provide such students. The only intelligent response was for the State to involve itself in the provision of secondary education.⁸¹

To all intents and purposes the whole unseemly squabble sparked by the Education Department's formal entry into secondary education was pointless. The government pressed ahead with plans for the State's second secondary school. It accepted costs for the building as part of the Loans Estimates in October 1908, called tenders for the building in August 1909 and, apart from some cost

overruns, the construction of the school proceeded without major complications.⁸²

Perth Modern School

Andrews set out his plans for the administration of the new school in November 1909. It would be called the Perth Modern School, to reflect its modern curriculum and to differentiate it from Perth High School. All first-year students would be at least twelve years of age, hold Qualifying Certificates and be recommended for admission by the head teachers of their respective primary schools. The four-year course would comprise a common two-year lower school program, followed by two years' study leading to matriculation or towards careers in commerce, teaching or agriculture. The inclusion of teaching as an upper-school option allowed the Normal School to close and the building to be used again for instructing monitors. Andrews recommended tuition fees of £6 *per annum* for all students except the holders of ten major scholarships worth £20 *per annum* and of forty minor scholarships worth £10 *per annum*. The scholarships, twenty percent of which were to be reserved for country students, were to be awarded on the basis of an annual examination. Scholars could present their scholarships, which were tenable for four years subject to adequate academic performance, at any approved secondary school including Perth Modern School.⁸³

By the end of 1910 it was clear that Andrews had underestimated the demand for first year places. He was forced to scrap his original admissions policy and instead made entry to the new school competitive. All intending applicants were required to sit for the scholarship examination, which became the Scholarship and Entrance Examination.⁸⁴ He hoped, however, that this measure would be temporary and that:

when a sufficient number of High Schools is available, the possession of the Qualifying Certificate will entitle the holder to admission, provided that he is prepared to remain for the full four years' course.⁸⁵

Andrews introduced the Qualifying Certificate examination in 1912. It was awarded on the results of an inspectorial assessment of Standard VI students and an external examination in English and

arithmetic. Possession of the certificate was to 'enable a pupil to proceed to Secondary Schools of the Department without further examination'.⁸⁶ If the introduction of the certificate was designed to pressure the government into opening more schools in the metropolitan area, it failed miserably. In 1913 Andrews was forced to announce that 'a Qualifying Certificate will not secure admission to Perth Modern School'⁸⁷ and just four years later the Certificate was withdrawn.⁸⁸

From this point, an ever-decreasing minority of students who passed the Scholarship and Entrance Examination found places at Perth Modern School. They were, invariably, a mix of students from State schools in middle-class communities where coaching was available and intellectually talented students from working-class homes. Gregory contends that in the period between the First and Second World Wars the ratio between the two groups was three to one.⁸⁹ The distortion caused by coaching became a perennial problem that was manifest in certain schools winning the lion's share of places. It was a problem that persisted until the State's only selective secondary school became a comprehensive high school in 1959.

Perth Modern School opened its doors to 226 students in February 1911. In the lower-secondary school all students enrolled in a common course that included domestic science for girls as a preparation for marriage and manual training for boys so that they might learn to appreciate the skills of the artisan. All students studied a full range of mathematics subjects, physics and chemistry or biology, English, one or more of French, German, Latin and classical Greek and history and geography.⁹⁰

In the two-year upper school, considerable pre-vocational specialisation was permitted. Students could choose a science or humanities option to prepare for entry to the technical school, teachers' college or university, when instituted. The education option was created by the closure of the Normal School but terminated when the last students finished their course. An agricultural option offered male students instruction in English, agricultural mathematics, chemistry, botany, first aid, bookkeeping, metalwork, carpentry, agricultural theory, agricultural practice and camp cookery. Commercial students studied English, French, German, commercial arithmetic, geography, history, shorthand,

bookkeeping, typewriting, penmanship and office systems and business practice. The final pre-vocational option Andrews' intended to introduce was domestic science for girls who desired to prepare for 'the domestic vocation'.⁹¹ This course never began because in 1913, when fees were abolished and the University of Western Australia opened, the demand for places in the academic stream exploded, eventually forcing Andrews to abandon the other vocational options.

The Modern School boycott and its consequences

From the moment of its laborious birth Perth Modern School was arguably the most exclusive institution in the state. Its curriculum was unique and its students were selected not only on the capacity of their parents to pay the required fees but also on their personal academic merit. Such exclusivity intensified the threat that the existence of the new institution posed to the schools of the Secondary Schools' Association. Unable to prevent the introduction of science into the secondary curriculum in Western Australia, the Association opted for social isolation as a defence against the interloper.

In March 1911, Modern School's headmaster George Brown approached the Reverend Percy Henn of Guildford Grammar School and asked him to explain the Association's attitude. Henn declined but told Brown that contact between the Association's schools and Perth Modern School was unlikely unless the latter was admitted to the Association. Brown applied immediately for membership but he and his school were rejected unanimously without explanation. One reason for the rejection became apparent later in the year when the Rhodes' Scholarship Selection Committee recognised Perth Modern School within the meaning of the conditions for the award. Without access to sporting competitions with boys' secondary schools, Modern School students would have difficulty demonstrating the athletic ability required of applicants.⁹²

Brown became so exasperated by the intransigent attitude of the Secondary Schools' Association that in November 1911 he asked Andrews to withhold payment of all government scholarships and exhibitions from students associated with the Association's schools. Acting under ministerial instruction,

Andrews intervened. He asked Faulkner to explain the reasons for the Association's refusal to compete with Perth Modern School in sporting competitions. Faulkner replied that the Association's trophies were only for competition among boys of 'the classes of the community' who sent their sons to private schools. Angered by the Association's arrogance, Andrews informed his minister that:

if it is in the interests of the non-State schools, and of the 'classes of the community' concerned, that they should not mix with the scholars of the State Secondary school in friendly games, it must surely be in the interests of the non-State schools and of the 'classes of the community' concerned to preserve them from the admission of State School Scholarship holders.

Thomas Walker, the Minister for Education in the Labor Party government that came to power in the same month, informed the Premier John Scaddan who threatened to publish the contents of Faulkner's letter and rely upon public pressure to change the Association's attitude. The Association, however, remained obdurate.⁹³

Another reason for the stance of the Secondary Schools' Association stance became apparent at a meeting between its members and Andrews in May 1912. The members claimed that as their schools had 'borne the burden of secondary education' for the State until 1911, they should not now have to submit to competition from State schools without some form of financial recompense.⁹⁴ Until such compensation was forthcoming, it was in their financial interests to emphasise the social differences between their schools and those of the State. The best way of doing this was, in their opinion, by boycotting Perth Modern School.⁹⁵

The metropolitan newspapers sided with Perth Modern School against the Secondary Schools' Association in the dispute. Even *The West Australian* claimed that:

the sooner the recalcitrant headmasters ... hasten to obliterate from their souls the contemptible and un-Australian sin of snobbery—the sooner they will regain the goodwill and respect of the whole community.⁹⁶

The editorial attributed the boycott solely to Faulkner and called for the unilateral withdrawal of Perth High School's annual subsidy.

Clearly, Winthrop Hackett had undergone a Pauline conversion with the establishment of the University of Western Australia. Indeed, not even the university he laboured so hard to establish was now for the Establishment's sons for:

the rich, those to whom the name of a university is of more importance than the thing itself, will continue to send their children, in a few instances to the East, in a much larger number of cases to the universities of the mother land. But the workman, or the man who lives by a trade, those who admire and pine for an education for their children which was denied to themselves—these are the men for whose offspring the modern university is intended. It will be emphatically a poor man's institution, a place where his boys and girls may cultivate their aptitudes and prepare themselves for rising to any position their talent or resolution may entitle them to aspire.⁹⁷

The reason for his change of mind is not apparent but this passionate Irish Protestant left the 'modern ... poor man's institution' a generous bequest.

In August 1912 Walker advised Andrews not to pursue the boycott further. He then introduced the High School Act Amendment Bill into the Legislative Assembly. The Bill withdrew Perth High School's subsidy as from the beginning of the 1915-16 financial year. Ever mindful of the school's interest, the Legislative Council referred the Bill to a select committee. The committee reported that the old military hospital buildings were totally unsuited for use as a school and recommended that the Board be allowed to sell them to fund the relocation of the school to the Crown reserve in Havelock Street. It was also the Members' wish that the land and new buildings be vested in the High School's Board of Governors. Rather than fight the Council, the government incorporated this generous settlement in *The High School Amendment Act of 1912*.⁹⁸

An editorial in *The Cygnet*, Perth High School's student journal, claimed that there was 'little reasonable objection' to the withdrawal of the subsidy, which had been anticipated in any case. Even so, the Select Committee inquiry had 'once and for all identified the school's friends and enemies' and recorded the great debt 'owed by the people of the State for the benefits ... [the school had] conferred on them during the past thirty years'. What these gifts were the young writer failed to specify.

Faulkner was devastated by the turn of events. In his 1913 Speech Day address, he interpreted the loss of the subsidy as an attack on his stewardship:

it was, ... [he said], one of the greatest blows he had ever experienced to find that a 'grateful' country had appreciated the work of the best years of his life by punishing the unfortunate school for which he had worked, thought and cared beyond anything else outside his family.

Faulkner, who spent almost a quarter of a century as headmaster of Perth High School, returned to England an embittered man in 1914, the year in which the school moved to its new building in West Perth.⁹⁹

The Secondary Schools' Association continued to boycott Perth Modern School following Faulkner's retirement, demonstrating the injustice of Hackett's charge. When Joseph Parsons, who succeeded Brown as the Principal of Perth Modern School in 1913, applied for membership of the Secondary Schools' Athletic Association in 1917, the Association changed its name to the Public Schools' Athletics Association. It then refused Parsons' application because Perth Modern School did not have a board of governors, a prerequisite for new admissions. It also suggested to Parsons that he could form a more socially suitable athletics association for the boys from his school with teams from the technical schools and the farm school that had opened at Narrogin in 1913. Andrews marked the Association's response 'Comment is not necessary'.¹⁰⁰

Organising the Western Australian State education system

Andrews was absent when Perth Modern School opened. At the end of 1910 he took long-service leave and returned to England to attend the Second Imperial Education Conference in London. Following the conference, he visited schools in Europe and Canada to gather information relevant to the development of the Western Australian education system. On his return, he wrote *Report on Education Organisation*.¹⁰¹

The foundation of the system was a seven-grade primary school. Andrews expected the average student to take seven years, from the age of six to thirteen, to complete these classes successfully. Recognising seven grades was a longer period than many English

and European education systems devoted to primary education, he argued that:

fundamental education should be common to all to as late a period as is consistent with efficient preparation for those who are aiming at the University, without sacrificing the interest of those whose objective is of quite a different character ... [as] early separation means, to a great extent, the establishment of a class distinction.¹⁰²

Andrews felt that it would be wrong to establish Education Department schools that took academically-able students out of the primary school at nine or ten years of age. Such a practice would involve the State in creating an elite. In a society where parents placed their children in school and took them out as their fortunes waxed and waned, such a practice would also be economically inefficient as the pool of students available for selection would be restricted.

Andrews proposed four options for pupils who finished primary school. The State high school was the main institution on the second rung of his educational ladder. Its role was premised on the assumption that the government would eventually provide sufficient high schools to accommodate all the students who successfully completed Standard VI, gained a Qualifying Certificate and wished to undertake a four-year secondary education course.¹⁰³ With this population in mind Andrews pleaded for the high schools to be both academic and pre-vocational. He contended that as 'the greater number of pupils ... leave Secondary schools for immediate entrance upon their life's work', the government had a duty to provide a suitable secondary curriculum for such students. He asked his readers:

why should technical education be almost entirely a matter for evening classes or for part-time schools? Is not a fuller and wider education desirable for those who are to form the industrial and agricultural portions of the community? Many ... necessarily begin their work at once ... [from] Primary School, but would not many be prepared to take a further school course, if they could see that it had a direct bearing upon their vocation? Is not the general idea of High School work too narrow?¹⁰⁴

Andrews identified the classics-oriented university public examination system as the main obstacle in the way of high schools with science and pre-vocational curricula. To overcome this obstacle, he suggested two possible solutions. He thought it would be best if the Public Examinations authorities were prevailed upon to provide appropriate examinations. Alternatively, he felt the Education Department could develop its own examination system, giving priority to science and pre-vocational subjects.

In country districts, Andrews wanted secondary classes attached to State schools. When enrolments rose to a reasonable level, the government would establish separate high schools. The curriculum in country schools would relate to both the district economy and the demands of the public examination system. For example, in agricultural districts there would be an emphasis on agricultural science rather than on physics and chemistry and on the goldfields students would study geology.¹⁰⁵ For those metropolitan students who could not for the moment be accommodated in a high school of their choice, he recommended the introduction of a basic lower-secondary school course into the central schools 'so that ... [students] could be transferred to the [high school] at a later age.' This interim arrangement would come to an end when the number of high school places made available equalled the demand for qualified applicants.

Central schools would provide specialised two-year industrial, domestic science and commercial courses. Andrews justified this early specialisation on the grounds that students choosing this option would leave school at fourteen or fifteen years of age and move directly into the work force. As well as providing them with the opportunity for an extended vocational education in the technical schools he predicted that completion of one of these vocational courses would give them an advantage in competing for employment.¹⁰⁶ The industrial course was to be 'a direct introduction to the work of the future skilled tradesman'. A course exclusively for boys, it included drawing, woodwork, metalwork, workshop mathematics and science, English, history and geography. The domestic science course for girls would prepare them for apprenticeships as dressmakers, milliners or tailors, for service in Establishment households and, most importantly as far as Andrews was concerned, for motherhood. It included cookery,

pattern drafting, dressmaking, millinery, hygiene, first aid, home nursing, mothercraft and general housewifery as well as English, household arithmetic, needlework, drawing and geography. In preparation for entry into the Public Service and private businesses as messengers and office juniors, commercial students would study English, industrial history, commercial geography, civics, commercial arithmetic, bookkeeping and shorthand. Boys would take elementary science and woodwork and girls needlework and domestic science to ready them for the practical tasks of married life.¹⁰⁷

Andrews wrote a second report, *Report upon Continuation Schools and the Question of Compulsory Attendance*, in which he conceded that even with 'the adequate provision of high schools ... there [would] always be a very large remainder [of students] who go into some kind of employment as soon as they leave the primary school'. He argued that it was in the interests of the State to continue the education of this group. Attendance at continuation classes would give students guidance to compensate for the growing lack of discipline he perceived in homes and workplaces throughout the state. The classes would also play an important part in the development of the highly skilled workforce that would be needed if the state was ever to compete on world markets. In addition, continuation schools would contribute to the creation of the knowledgeable citizenry that every State needed 'if it was to be well and wisely governed'.¹⁰⁸

The fourth institution in Andrews' plan was the farm school. He envisaged it taking boys straight from the primary schools after completion of Standard VI and '[giving] them practical farm work while continuing their general education.' Farm school students would be the sons of small and 'not-so-wealthy' farmers and boys from the city and the goldfields who wanted to prepare for 'a life on the land'. The scions of Establishment farmers were of no concern to the Education Department as they already found their way to agricultural colleges in the eastern states. The main problem with the farm school for the Education Department was the cost. Each required residential accommodation, school buildings with specialised teaching staff and a farm with its own staff.¹⁰⁹

Claremont Teachers' Training College, the Education Department's technical schools and the University of Western

Australia stood on the third rung of Andrews' ladder. Completion of secondary school with passes in appropriate subjects would qualify students for admission to all three institutions. Completion of an agricultural school course also would allow the more academically able student to study agriculture at university level. Similarly, completion of a central school pre-vocational course or two years of continuation classes would qualify students for entry to technical school, where they would have the opportunity to complete trade and professional courses, some of which would open the way to university courses.¹¹⁰

Andrews' foresight expressed in the *Organization* is laudable. That he proposed such an ambitious plan when parliament still questioned the legitimacy of State secondary education was a courageous act. The fact that farmers were facing the worst of the 1913-14 drought and that war in Europe seemed inevitable was fortunate. Few people seemed to notice when the government accepted the report and published it.

Extending State secondary education provision

Between 1914 and 1919, Andrews had to contend with four governments in a political environment complicated by changing party allegiances as Australians contested the conscription referenda of 1916 and 1917. John Scaddan's Labor government held office until July 1916 when it lost a confidence vote. Frank Wilson then formed a Liberal government. He lost his position in a party *coup* in July 1917 to Sir Henry Lefroy. Lefroy led a New Nationalist government made up of Liberals and Labor conscriptionists until April 1919, when he was replaced by Hal Colebatch who resigned one month later. Colebatch's successor James Mitchell finally brought stability, remaining in office until 1924.¹¹¹

As well as the conscription conflict, the rise of the Country Party caused turbulence on the conservative side of state politics. Founded in 1913 by the Farmers' and Settlers' Association as its political arm, the party represented the interest of wheat growers, small graziers, orchardists and dairy farmers. After the defeat of the Labor government in 1916, the new party held the balance of power in the Legislative Assembly. Layman argues that the Country Party was acceptable to the conservative Establishment only because

it did not threaten 'the hegemony of the propertied ... [but] sought rather to extend its benefits to the farmer and country town small business man—to the rural petit-bourgeoisie'.¹¹² Their acceptance gave the Country Party powerful allies.

The first non-metropolitan State high school

The first country high school opened in 1914 on the Eastern Goldfields. The three-year struggle that led to its establishment was a demonstration of the considerable political influence of the Labor held goldfields electorates. Andrew McClintock, the secretary of the Kalgoorlie Committee of School Management led the campaign. Trained as a librarian at the University of Sydney's Fisher Library and with experience at the Melbourne Working Men's College, McClintock was a tireless and enthusiastic advocate for education. He informed Andrews in 1910 that sufficient demand existed in Kalgoorlie and Boulder to justify the presence of a State high school. Andrews was reluctant to make any commitment, however, as there was a state election due early in 1911.¹¹³

With the Labor Party's victory just a few weeks old, the Kalgoorlie School Committee approached Thomas Walker who agreed immediately to adapt the Boulder Technical School for use as a high school. After all, the government had won all thirteen goldfields seats¹¹⁴ and the provision of a high school in an under-utilised technical school was small reward for such loyalty. Andrews finalised plans for the modification of the existing buildings in July 1912 and scheduled the opening of the Education Department's second high school for the beginning of the 1913 school year. But the members of the Kalgoorlie School Committee were not impressed. They wanted a new building and would accept the use of the technical school only as a temporary expedient.¹¹⁵

When Andrews rejected the Committee's demand for a new school, McClintock approached Scaddan, who was both Premier and Member for Kalgoorlie. The Premier promised them that a new high school would be built as soon as possible.¹¹⁶ Andrews found Scaddan's decision difficult to accept and attempted to persuade Walker to resurrect the plan to modify the Boulder Technical School buildings.¹¹⁷ This was a politically naïve act as, faced with rising Country Party influence in the Legislative

Assembly, the Labor Government needed the support of the goldfields electorates. Predictably, Andrews' advice was ignored. The Education Department advertised for teaching staff in October 1913, signed the contract for the building in December 1913, invited enrolments in February 1914 and opened the school in May of the same year.¹¹⁸

Kalgoorlie was the only locality where Andrews' proposed relationship between the central and high schools ever became a reality. The small student population on the Eastern Goldfields meant the rigorous examination process that selected Perth Modern School entrants was irrelevant. For the new school's first intake the headmaster John Irvine recruited thirty students who had passed the Scholarship and Entrance Examination the previous year without gaining admission to Perth Modern School and thirty who had Qualifying Certificates.¹¹⁹ The following year he complained about the 'low calibre' of his first-year students, only five of whom would have qualified for entrance to Perth Modern School. With such students, he wrote, his school had no hope of competing with Perth Modern School. Eventually, however, he grasped the fact that departmental policy did not expect him to enter into competition with Perth Modern School. That school was an anomaly, something that Andrews and the government of the day had not planned. Irvine's task was to recruit students who had passed out of Standard VI and were prepared to commit to a secondary education course. Students not prepared to make that commitment could become post-primary students at the Boulder and Kalgoorlie central schools.¹²⁰

The first district high schools

Five district high schools opened before 1929 without local initiatives. The bases for their establishment were set out in 1916 in amendments to the Education Department's *Regulations*. The Minister for Education was empowered to:

direct that a School shall be termed a District High School, if he is satisfied that the number of children enrolled for a course of at least three (3) years beyond Class 6 is sufficient to justify this.¹²¹

Additional regulations gave the Minister the discretionary power to establish upper-secondary classes in district high schools and to establish a separate high school when the overall secondary-level enrolment in any such school reached 150 students.¹²²

There is nothing to indicate that these regulations were exclusive to country districts, but Andrews made no attempt to apply them to metropolitan communities. Rather, he made the transitional status of the district high school clear in his administrative instructions. They were to become separate high schools as quickly as possible and to this end he obliged all students who completed Standard VI in a district high school to enter the first year of the high school. Application of the Scholarship and Entrance Examination was out of the question. He also compelled High School Scholarship and Entrance winners from country primary schools to take up their awards at the district high school nearest to their homes rather than at Perth Modern School.¹²³ Given the desire of conservative and Labor governments to provide the best possible facilities for non-metropolitan students, Andrews appears to have accepted that only when the number of country high schools was sufficient to satisfy country politicians would conditions in the metropolitan area improve. Until that moment Perth Modern School would continue to be the State's one metropolitan high school.

The government reclassified the Northam and Geraldton State schools as district high schools in 1917, the Bunbury and Albany State Schools in 1918 and the Collie State School in 1924.¹²⁴ By 1920 the Northam and Bunbury District High Schools had five secondary classes. Albany followed two years later. In 1928 Geraldton too had classes in all five secondary years.¹²⁵ Only Collie failed to develop an upper-secondary school enrolment. State high schools opened at Northam in 1921, at Bunbury in 1923 and at Albany in 1925. Geraldton, however, waited until 1939 for its high school and Collie until 1952.¹²⁶

Neglect of secondary education in the metropolitan area

When it first became apparent that the government would not countenance another high school in the metropolitan area, Andrews introduced an academic stream into the central schools. As he foreshadowed in *Report on Education Organization*,

he believed it would be an interim measure. Called the professional course, it was for those students who wanted to matriculate but were unable to enter Perth Modern School. The new course was introduced at Perth Boys' School and Perth Girls' School in 1915 and spread quickly to other metropolitan central schools. Students in the professional stream took their place beside students in the commercial, industrial and domestic science streams that had begun in 1913. They studied a set curriculum that included English, mathematics, history geography, French, biology for girls and physics for boys. On completion, they sat for the University of Western Australia's Public Examination Board (PEB) Junior Certificate examination, which replaced the University of Adelaide examinations in 1915.¹²⁷ Those who passed at an acceptable level were then admitted to Perth Modern School's upper-secondary classes, where they prepared for the Leaving Certificate examination.¹²⁸

The professional course compared poorly with the lower-secondary course in the high schools, where students had a choice of languages and sciences. Furthermore, primary school teachers in classrooms designed and equipped according to primary school specifications taught the professional course. In fact, it was a cheap substitute for the adequate provision of high schools in the metropolitan area and a handy tool for the provision of senior secondary education, as Andrews was forced to demonstrate in 1916.

Alterations to the Junior Certificate Examination Regulations in 1915 required the addition of a third year to the lower-secondary school course beginning in 1916. In those central schools where this change created accommodation shortages, Andrews moved their primary classes to neighbouring State schools.¹²⁹ The accommodation shortage experienced for the same reason at Perth Modern School did not lend itself to such a solution. To solve the problem Andrews denied central school students who had passed the Junior Certificate examination entry to Modern School. He then emptied Perth Boys' School of its primary classes and shifted the industrial stream students into under-utilised accommodation in the grounds of Perth Technical School. In their new location, the industrial students became the Perth Junior Technical School, the first of two such schools opened in Western Australia. Andrews' justification for the change appeared in *Report on Industrial*

Education, which suggested the establishment of a series of junior technical and technical high schools that would feed graduates into the Perth Technical College.¹³⁰

In the space made available at Perth Boys' School, Andrews began coeducational Standard X and XI classes.¹³¹ By 1919 Perth Boys' School was an incongruous institution: a boys' primary school functioning as a five-year co-educational high school. With such a cheap solution to the Perth Modern School accommodation crisis to hand, the government decided that a second high school was unnecessary and added a minimum of new classrooms to the school. As a result, in 1922 the Standard X and XI classes at Perth Boys' School closed and the Standard X students were removed to Modern School.¹³² Coincidentally, substantial high schools were under construction at Northam in 1920, Bunbury in 1922 and Albany in 1923.

The flexibility of the central schools as institutions for the provision of secondary education was now self-evident. Andrews' innovative use of Perth Boys' School was ample demonstration. If governments needed further convincing, by the mid-1920s the central school professional course had proven itself as an innovation. Given the fact that Perth Modern School took approximately ninety entrants annually, the professional stream figures show that by 1923 the metropolitan area could easily have sustained three additional State high schools of similar size.¹³³ Only economically uncertain times toward the end of the decade stopped the number rising further. With the central school as an alternative to the high school operating in the metropolitan area, successive governments continued to neglect secondary education in the state capital.

The agricultural doctrine and the 1921 Royal Commission

The provision of high schools in country districts was part of the government's land settlement policy, which was built upon the belief that agricultural growth would resolve the state's economic woes. In 1916, as Minister for Education, Hal Colebatch appropriated Andrews' argument for the primacy of science in the secondary school to claim that efficient agricultural industries depended upon the provision of country high schools to produce

the skilled and knowledgeable farmers and agricultural scientists that the expanding industry needed.¹³⁴ Andrews agreed with his minister, stating that:

without it [agriculture], there seems to be no prospect for future prosperity for the State, or for the establishment of more secondary industries Great efforts are now being made to increase the number of settlers on the land, and it will be necessary to adopt every possible method to render the life of the country more attractive. Group settlements, better means of communication by road and rail, extension of telephone and postal facilities will all contribute to this end. But there is no doubt that one factor which will go far towards making the country resident contented with his surroundings, is the provision of good education for his children.¹³⁵

So convinced was the Premier James Mitchell that State education should be harnessed to the plough that in the debate on the 1928 Education Bill he declared that every State school student should study agriculture in order to 'develop the agricultural instinct'. Charles Latham agreed, informing the Legislative Assembly that as the 'only true opening in this State lies in the extension of the pastoral and agricultural industries, it would be wise if we based all our education on rural education.'¹³⁶

Parliament's single-minded commitment to agriculture as the means of economic salvation was highlighted during the 1915 Second Reading Debate on the Estimates for the Education Department, when the first call for an inquiry into the Education Department was made. Members from both sides of the Legislative Assembly were sharply critical of the level of education expenditure. They accused Andrews of wasting money in the city while many country children continued to live beyond the reach of State schools. In the course of the debate, the Member for York, Harold Griffiths, called for an inquiry into the Education Department, saying that it was evident:

that the time has come when the Department should be thoroughly overhauled. There are directions in which a wise economy is necessary, and if the Department cannot be brought to see the need for less extravagant ideas, a Royal Commission should be appointed to investigate the matter The present lavish expenditure is not necessary.¹³⁷

Griffith's criticism found favour with *The West Australian*. Reverting to its earlier pre-Perth Modern School antagonism towards Andrews and the Education Department, an editorial claimed that while the number of primary students in State schools had increased by thirty-eight per cent, expenditure had increased by fifty per cent. Asserting that the twelve per cent difference represented waste, it declared that taxpayers' money should not be squandered on luxuries like secondary education when private schools provided all that was needed.¹³⁸

The defeat of the Labor Party in 1916 and the formation of a Liberal government led by Frank Wilson subdued the critics.¹³⁹ Andrews, however, could not resist expressing his dissatisfaction with the Education Department's niggardly budgets. Motivated by reformist postwar legislation in England, he called for increased funding to expand and reconstruct the Education Department's activities.¹⁴⁰ In 1920, he told Colebatch that the Australian Directors of Education Conference believed that seven or eight years of compulsory primary education was insufficient to maintain the economic and social stability of postwar Australia. It wanted the introduction of a minimum school-leaving age of fifteen years in all states. Without it, the Directors felt nothing would 'save the country from uneducated literacy.' Colebatch was not impressed.¹⁴¹

Andrews' ongoing demands for increased funding provoked an inevitable parliamentary backlash. When Education Department expenditure exceeded £400 000 for the first time in 1920, having doubled in the nine years since 1911, both sides of the Legislative Assembly rose to attack him.¹⁴² His critics demanded a royal commission. Faced with the effects of a mounting deficit, falling Gross Domestic Product, rising inflation and labour shortages since the end of the 1914-1918 War,¹⁴³ the government wished to rein in the education budget. A royal commission seemed a likely vehicle to legitimate some belt-tightening. On 10 November 1920 Scaddan rose in the Legislative Assembly to announce that there would be 'an inquiry made into the administration of the Education Department and the education system generally.'¹⁴⁴

The government appointed Peter Board, the Director of Education in New South Wales, to chair the inquiry. Charles Pitchford, a Perth

businessman, and Athelstan Saw, a medical practitioner, member of the Legislative Council and governor of Perth High School, acted as Assistant Commissioners. The Royal Commission's terms of reference required it to determine whether the State was receiving value for money from the Education Department. They also asked if the Department's schools, particularly in country areas, could be made more relevant to Western Australia's economic requirements, whether the administration of the Department was defective and whether there were any extravagances, defects or deficiencies that could be removed.¹⁴⁵

The Commission's report endorsed Andrews' administration of the Education Department as 'capable'.¹⁴⁶ The word reeked of faint praise. On the bright side, it found against reducing government expenditure on education, but that was the end of the good news. All the Commission's recommendations were made taking into account the government's limited budget.

In relation to secondary education, the Royal Commission affirmed the conditions under which the Education Department had established the country high schools. It also approved the existing relationship between Perth Modern School and the central schools, contending that:

only a small proportion of the population requires the type of education that leads to the university. By far the larger number require the kind of education that qualifies them for productive employment by the time they reach the age of sixteen. For this reason high schools ... should be restricted to those pupils who possess the qualification that will enable them to fill the places in the community for which a long unspecialised instruction will fit them.

The one exception to this approval was the professional course. The Commission felt that:

on this account ... an undue attractiveness is ... given to the general courses in [the central] schools by attaching the name 'professional' to them.¹⁴⁷

To suggest that a change of name would discourage children from entering the course was ridiculous. Nevertheless, the Commission's narrow interpretation of secondary education was the death knell

for Andrews' vision of a sufficient number of high schools accessible to all students who, after passing out of Standard VI, were prepared to embark on five years of a secondary education appropriate to their interests.

The Commission's recommendation that the students in the commercial, industrial and domestic science streams in central schools spend less time studying cultural subjects such as history, geography, English literature and art reflected the vocational ethos of the New South Wales junior technical, junior commercial and domestic science schools. It also flew in the face of Andrews's evidence to the Commission in which he claimed that it would be a retrograde step to sacrifice general education for expanded vocational competencies. His aim, he said, was for the central schools to deliver pre-vocational courses that developed an understanding of English culture, thoughtful citizenship and an understanding of some of the basic skills required in groups of related trades.¹⁴⁸

It is difficult to accept Mossenson's assertion that the Board Report constituted a forward-looking policy guide for the Education Department.¹⁴⁹ It endorsed the inadvertent academic elitism of Perth Modern School, demanded that academic education in the central schools be suppressed and recommended a truncated general curriculum in the central schools. As a prescription for future education policy its recommendations were at best reactionary.

After the Board Report

The extensions to Perth Modern School proved of limited value. Andrews reported in 1924 that once again he would have to refuse admission to post-Junior Certificate students from the central schools. With the improvisation at Perth Boys' School still fresh in their minds, the government ignored his call for another State high school in the metropolitan area.¹⁵⁰ This time, however, Andrews made no attempt to reintroduce post-Junior classes in the central schools. Consequently, entry to Perth Modern School's fourth and fifth year classes became more selective. After 1926, only those students who had attended Perth Boys' School, Perth Girls' School, Fremantle Boys' School, the Princess May School or the Claremont Central School for three years, studied French for two years

and had a satisfactory Junior Certificate pass were admitted.¹⁵¹ Andrews' successor, Wallace Clubb, introduced additional restrictions in 1931. On Parsons' advice, he required applicants from the chosen schools to have studied arithmetic, algebra, geometry and trigonometry for three years and either physics, chemistry or biology for at least two years.¹⁵² He also circulated a memorandum to the central schools instructing head teachers, wherever possible, to refer students to the full-time day matriculation classes established at Perth Technical School by the Superintendent of Technical Education James Lynch.¹⁵³ Despite these restrictions, the number of students in the professional stream reached 968 in 1927, before falling away as the declining economy made the commercial and industrial streams more attractive to boys.

Denied the possibility of adequate provision for secondary education in the metropolitan area, Andrews worked through the Public Examinations Board to improve certification opportunities for central school students. Supported by Walter Murdoch, who professed English at the University, he called for the introduction of general science to replace physics, chemistry, biology, geology and agricultural science in the Junior Certificate syllabus.¹⁵⁴ A non-specialised science subject of this type was ideal for the central schools, which lacked secondary school style science classrooms. The subcommittee appointed to consider the request recommended against it on the grounds that such a subject would lack academic rigour.¹⁵⁵ When the Board finally introduced general science in 1928, it was not as a replacement for the more specialised subjects, but as an inferior subject for inferior students.¹⁵⁶

Andrews had greater success with the introduction of vocational subjects into the examination schedule. In 1926, the Public Examinations Board established a subcommittee to consider the introduction of domestic science, woodwork and metalwork as Junior Certificate subjects. The subcommittee recommended their inclusion, but the Board was not satisfied. It formed a second subcommittee to consider the relationship between academic and non-academic subjects at the Junior Certificate level. This subcommittee recommended a subject-grouping scheme. English was the only subject in Group One. Group Two comprised history, geography and languages other than English. Group Three included all science and mathematics subjects and Group Four domestic

science, metal work and woodwork. Commercial subjects would be included in Group Four after the last Commercial Junior Certificate examination in 1930. To qualify for a certificate under the new arrangement, candidates would have to pass five subjects, including a minimum of one from each of the first three groups. The Board adopted the scheme and it was introduced at the 1930 examinations.¹⁵⁷

The scheme gave students in the industrial and domestic science streams of the central schools the chance to gain socially recognised certificates for the first time. It also extended the industrial and domestic science courses from two to three years. This put tremendous pressure on accommodation in the central schools. For Western Australia, the timing of the change could not have been worse. Australia was on the cusp of the Great Depression but Andrews did not have to witness the Education Department's struggle to hang on to the splintered rungs of the ladder he set out in *Education Organization*.

The Education Department and the Depression

The economic crash of 1930 coincided with the election of a National-Country Party government led by a single-minded disciple of agriculture, James Mitchell, who appointed Norbert Keenan as his Minister for Education.¹⁵⁸ Despite Clubb's protests, one of Keenan's first acts was to close Claremont Teachers' Training College. He then commissioned an independent report on the relative costs of preparing candidates for public examinations in the central schools and high schools. The report estimated the annual cost of preparing a Junior Certificate candidate in the central schools at £12/4/0 compared with £21/5/6 in the high schools and recommended that high school students should be educated either in the central schools or in schools similar to the transitional district high schools. If, however, the government decided to retain the high schools, it advocated that fees be charged to cover the difference in cost between the high school and central school systems. Andrews' improvisation, the professional course, appeared about to bear bitter fruit.¹⁵⁹

Clubb had difficulty coming to terms with the fact that the Education Department's high schools were under threat. He informed Keenan that:

Central Schools do not have as wide a range of curriculum as the High Schools ... In the Central Schools only one foreign language is available for study, whereas in the High Schools Latin, French and German are available, and also a wider range of science is provided.

He admitted the obvious economies to be had by delivering all secondary education under the primary school conditions prevailing in the central schools, but stated that to do so would be regressive. In his opinion, all government school students, including those in the post-primary classes of the central schools had the right to a free secondary education in well-equipped schools offering courses suited to their needs and aspirations.¹⁶⁰

Clubb's concern with improved access to secondary education was both a reaction to the report's recommendations and a reflection of growing community interest in the welfare of unemployed adolescents. As the Depression cut into the state's economy, voluntary organisations experimented with training programs for school-leavers in an attempt to keep young people out of the job market and to protect them from radical political organisations and undesirable social influences. The organisations also campaigned for a higher school-leaving age and improved vocational training in State schools for the same reasons. The fact that there was no work for these children—trained or untrained—mattered little.¹⁶¹

In November 1930 the Women's Service Guild and the State School Teachers' Union organised a conference of service organisations to publicise the problems faced by the state's youth in hard economic times.¹⁶² The conference called for the government to improve access to vocational training and to raise the school-leaving age. Keenan rejected the request as such measures would require the government to fund the construction of another central school in the metropolitan area.¹⁶³ Instead, he charged that:

the first duty of the Government is to provide facilities for children in the country ... [because] country people were the only people who could pull the State out of its difficulties.¹⁶⁴

He also dismissed an alternative suggestion from social welfare lobbyists that the ages between which education was compulsory should be lifted from six and fourteen years to seven and fifteen years. In his opinion, this change would do nothing to improve the employment prospects of school-leavers and would cost taxpayers a minimum of £20,000 to implement.¹⁶⁵

Keenan then shut the evening continuation classes, closing the route by which children who left school before the end of Standard VIII could gain admission to a technical school.¹⁶⁶ He pointed out, quite reasonably, that as few students leaving school at the age of fourteen had any prospect of employment, they could easily remain at school until they had completed Standard VIII, the prerequisite for entry to the technical school. The government needed the funds released by the closure to provide additional facilities for country students. Such children, he believed, deserved the best that the State could provide because:

their parents ...[were] facing all the drawbacks and discomforts of isolation in order to do the work, the fruits of which alone can pull the state through its trials and difficulties.

Furthermore, he declared that until every country child had access to appropriate schooling he would not hesitate to save money by closing other unnecessary educational services in the metropolitan area. Moreover, he would be the arbiter of what was necessary.¹⁶⁷

Coming so soon after the closure of the continuation classes, this threat provoked a public outcry. Keenan was accused of being obsessed by the financial crisis, having a nineteenth century approach to State-funded schooling and threatening the existence of high schools and central schools.¹⁶⁸ Such was the strength of community feeling that he was forced to permit James Lynch, the Director of Technical Education, to establish preparatory technical classes to replace the continuation classes. Lynch extended this permission to include the establishment of day-matriculation

classes at Perth Technical College for students who, if not for the Depression, would have found employment in white-collar positions in the city. Both classes, which began in 1931, proved to be valuable services. The former kept aloft the ladder from the post-primary classes to the technical school for those forced to leave primary school before reaching Standard VIII. The latter enabled students excluded from Perth Modern School to prepare for the Leaving Certificate examination.¹⁶⁹ For two decades these classes provided successive governments with an excuse to delay the opening of another five-year high school in the metropolitan area.

Sir Edward Wittenoom, the member for North Province in the Legislative Council, was another threat to the State's post-primary and secondary education facilities. In June 1931, he called for the government to restrict its educational provision to primary school students between the ages of six and fourteen years. He claimed that the five private boys' secondary schools, with average tuition fees of £30 *per annum*, were well within the reach of families likely to send their sons to State high schools.¹⁷⁰ The Perth Chamber of Commerce welcomed his demand and called for its immediate implementation. In addition, the headmasters of Hale School and Scotch College, which were suffering economically like all private secondary schools, offered Sir Edward their support.¹⁷¹

Other members of the community, however, were quick to castigate Wittenoom. A former Minister for Education, John Drew, expressed his outrage in the Legislative Council, saying:

I feel I should not remain silent in respect of the efforts of Sir Edward to prevent the continuance of the good work done by the secondary schools ... Sir Edward's attitude toward the cost of education in this State does not come as a surprise to any one here. We have been accustomed to it ... but on previous occasions the Hon. Member's remarks were not regarded too seriously. There was no one ... who came into the open to endorse the Hon. Member's views. It is different now. The State and Commonwealth are in the throes of a financial depression, and ... there are some who applaud the action taken by the Hon. Member ... It should be patent to anyone that the State secondary schools are doing valuable work for the country, work which will be reflected in ... the more scientific building up of the superstructure of the State.¹⁷²

Similarly affronted Walter Murdoch asserted that not even Wittenoom could be ignorant of the fact that very few Western Australians could afford £30 *per annum* to send a son to a private secondary school. This being so, 'the underlying meaning of his remarks must be that the children of parents who cannot afford to pay fees are not worthy of secondary education'.¹⁷³ Other organisations, including the Teachers' Union, the Western Australian Branch of the Australian Labor Party, the National Council of Women, the West Australian Association of University Women, the Girls' Friendly Society and the Federation of Parents' and Citizens' Associations also expressed their wrath.

As unlikely as it was that Keenan could have persuaded the Cabinet to implement such a politically contentious suggestion, Wittenoom's agenda remained a threat until the Minister resigned in August 1931.¹⁷⁴ His successor Thomas Davy managed to cut education expenditure by twenty percent between 1930-31 and 1931-32 without further damaging the State school system's institutional integrity. Most of the saving came from salary reductions imposed as part of the 1931 Premiers' Plan. In keeping with this cost-cutting agreement, the Western Australian Parliament passed the Financial Emergency Act, which suspended the Public Service Appeal Board and reduced teachers' salaries by up to twenty three percent. According to Mossenson, these salary reductions saved the high schools from closure.¹⁷⁵

The savings made by reducing expenditure on buildings and maintenance were also significant. Expenditure remained below the 1929-30 level for almost a decade. The construction of a new building for the Perth Girls' School, completed in 1936, was the government's single extravagance in a period of extreme austerity. As early as October 1931, Davy acknowledged that maintenance on schools was already 'most frightfully behind-hand', and foresaw that:

the time is bound to come when we shall have to face a terrible repair bill, and be faced with a greater expenditure on additional schools and for increases in accommodation in existing schools.¹⁷⁶

It was not until the 1950s, however, that Davy's prophecy was fulfilled.

The growing influence of the State School Teachers' Union

The State School Teachers' Union became an influential participant in the State's education policy-making in the 1930s. In 1932 it adapted the report of the consultative committee of Great Britain's Board of Education chaired by Sir William Hadow, *The Education of the Adolescent*, to form its own secondary education policy. The Union's policy maintained that the overcrowded and dingy classrooms, the absence of libraries and science classrooms, and the outdated domestic science and manual training centres that characterised the central schools disadvantaged students. To overcome these manifest inadequacies in provision, it recommended a two-part strategy that allowed for the central schools to be reclassified as secondary modern schools. First, it wanted the Education Department to lift the standard of vocational training in the central schools, to recognise post-primary and secondary education as equivalent, and then to install high school facilities like those at Perth Modern School in the central schools. Once these conditions were met, the policy recommended that the school-leaving age be raised to sixteen. When this occurred the central schools would be reclassified as secondary modern schools and all State school students between the ages of twelve and sixteen years would attend a secondary school suited to their needs and aspirations.¹⁷⁷

Coinciding as it did with the peak levels of Depression-induced unemployment, the emphasis in the Union's policy on extending the period of pre-vocational training attracted the interest of employers, philanthropic groups and *The West Australian*, which reported the policy in some detail.¹⁷⁸ Clubb found it difficult to accept the press coverage given to the Union's policy. He complained to Davy that it gave the impression that the Union was 'teaching the Department its business through the agency of the annual conference of teachers.' Whether or not parity between central schools and high schools could or should be granted was none of the Union's business.¹⁷⁹

When approached by the Teachers' Union on the same issue in 1936, Clubb's successor James Klein claimed that the central schools already enjoyed similar status to the high schools and received similar treatment from the Education Department

in terms of the provision of facilities.¹⁸⁰ He based what seems at face value to be a silly statement on the 1935 reorganisation of the central school courses. As Chief Inspector of Schools he had renamed the professional course the five-year high school course and introduced a junior high school course that incorporated the commercial course and a technical course that subsumed the domestic science and industrial courses.¹⁸¹ The reorganisation reflected his hope that the magnificent new Perth Girls' School building, rising majestically in front of the dismal homes of East Perth's unemployed and working poor, represented the start of an era in which the principles and teaching methods of the New Education movement would be implemented in Western Australia.¹⁸² He wanted students to be able to express their unique talents in learning environments that integrated academic, creative, aesthetic and social activities. Only in this way, he suggested, could students be prepared to participate fully in the complex industrial society that he expected to rise phoenix-like from the ashes of the Depression.¹⁸³

The Teachers' Union had less faith in the Western Australian government than the Director of Education. In 1937 it adopted a Five Year Plan that aimed at improving the provision of State education. Included in the plan were the 1932 proposals to raise the school leaving age to sixteen years and improve conditions in the central schools prior to their reclassification as secondary modern schools. The Minister for Education, Frank Wise, rejected these proposals out of hand. He informed the Union that he regarded the Education Department as a non-earning unproductive agency, the budget of which should be cut to the barest minimum compatible with the fulfilment of the government's legal obligations to the children of Western Australia.¹⁸⁴

Isaac Kandell and Frank Wise

Notwithstanding his enthusiasm for slashing the education budget by restricting free education to children between the ages of six and fourteen, Wise could not avoid honouring the government's commitment to support the 1937 New Education Fellowship's Australian Conference. Sponsored by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) and endorsed by state and federal governments, the conference brought prominent educationists from

around the globe to every Australian capital and many large country towns. In the twelve months prior to the event, enthusiasm among teachers reached a state of almost evangelical fervour, so much so that *The Western Australian Teachers' Journal* informed its readers:

[the delegates'] very names ... will open ... new vistas ... they bring ideas garnered from an inside knowledge of education as it is carried on throughout the world, and of the changes that are taking place. In Australia we are hesitating on the brink of educational reconstruction. Elsewhere we see bold reforms initiated; but we are intimidated by the caution bred of our isolation. These visitors come to dispel our timidity and to encourage us to go forward boldly in keeping with the reputation for courage which Australia has made for itself in the past. Shortly we shall take the plunge and the teacher will be called upon to make his contribution to the new order in education.

It concluded by exhorting Union members to go out into their districts and 'be missionaries for education', informing the people of the issues and encouraging them to attend the conference.¹⁸⁵

At the Perth session of the conference, which began on 14 September, delegates criticised the centralised control that was characteristic of State education throughout Australia. They told packed audiences at the University of Western Australia that compulsory standard curricula so characteristic of all Australian education systems prevented teachers from developing the courses best suited to their students' needs. They declared that inspection, poor teacher training and promotion by seniority had stultified the professional development of Australian educators.¹⁸⁶ Frederick Hart, Professor of Education at the University of California, went so far as to claim that by concentrating on public examination preparation Australian secondary schools had reduced teachers to slave drivers. More importantly, in doing so they had produced a society which valued education only for what it added to an individual's earning capacity.¹⁸⁷

The Conference's greatest impact in Western Australia, however, came after the event. In August 1937, the Public Service Commissioner had announced in his annual report that following James Klein's retirement in 1938 the Director of Education would no longer be head of the Education Department. A new office

of Under Secretary of Education would be created and filled from among the senior bureaucrats in the Public Service. Wise contended that only 'the appointment of a first class administrator' would help reduce education spending.¹⁸⁸ When approached by the Union to discuss the proposed change, the Minister pointedly refused to consider retaining the existing administrative structure, asserting that only a disinterested civil servant could be trusted to make the cuts in spending that he wanted to make in the education portfolio.¹⁸⁹

In the Second Reading Debate on the amendments to the Education Act necessary to create the Under Secretary's office, Wise likened the Education Department to the Public Works Department.¹⁹⁰ A conference delegate, Professor Isaac Kandell, had remained in Western Australia to conduct research for the ACER. He was affronted by the Minister's analogy. He told a reporter that it was wrong to treat education in the same way as roads, water supply and sewerage systems and blamed the whole situation on the 'apathy' of a Western Australian public. In his opinion, the people were 'not trained to look for or demand anything more than examination results and certificates' from their education system.¹⁹¹ Later, at a public lecture he decried the changes proposed by Wise as 'reactionary' and 'retrogressive', stating that he knew:

of no system anywhere in any democratic country, where complete control is not in the hands of the Director of Education, subject of course to public opinion and its constitutional representativesEducation is essentially a social function, which deals with human personalities and ... is not something that can be doled out under pressure of financial exigencies. Nor is an education department a non-earning branch of government. It is, in fact, the branch of government, which makes possible the earning possibilities of all other branches of government, and of the economic and social life of the community.¹⁹²

Following Kandell's criticism, which was driven home to the government when a Union deputation waited on the Premier, two Members crossed the floor to vote against the Bill. Wise then withdrew his legislation. Without it, the government was obliged to appoint a new Director of Education. The Chief Inspector Charles Hadley filled the position when Klein retired. Murray Little, a District Inspector on the Eastern Goldfields, was promoted

unexpectedly to the Chief Inspectors' office over the heads of all but two members of the Inspector's Institute. Seniority, for once, was not considered.¹⁹³

Hadley, who was within eighteen months of retirement at the time of his appointment, stubbornly defended the Education Department's established practices against the Conference critics. He declared that centralised control provided equivalent facilities in government schools throughout the state and thus, equality of opportunity for all students. The standardised curriculum, moreover, did not hamper the freedom of teachers to experiment. If they wanted to introduce innovations, all they had to do was to obtain the permission of the local district inspector. As few teachers showed any interest in experimental work, he concluded that the majority were happy working in a regulated and predictable system.¹⁹⁴

Having committed himself to the *status quo*, Hadley refused to acknowledge the need for significant change. When informed by Teachers' Union representatives in February 1938 that there was an unacceptable strain on facilities and educational programs at Perth Boys' School, Perth Girls' School, Perth Girls' Central School and Perth Junior Technical School, he rejected their complaint. This was despite the fact that enrolments in these inner-city schools exceeded the accommodation provided by 560 places.¹⁹⁵ As an olive branch, he suggested that when the eight classrooms approved for the new Kent Street Central School in Victoria Park were built, there was a possibility that the situation might resolve itself. Meanwhile, he asked the Union to be patient. He hoped that the situation would improve as students left school on their fourteenth birthday.¹⁹⁶ That he presided over a school system dependent upon students dropping out of school to maintain accommodation at a satisfactory level did not seem to trouble the new Director. Others in the community, however, were worried about the State's overcrowded schools.

The community and educational reform

Overcrowded and materially impoverished conditions in the central schools during the 1930s sharpened community awareness of the dubious validity of the selection process for entry to Perth Modern School. In 1934, the Inglewood Parents' and Citizens'

Association informed Clubb that they believed that the High School Scholarship and Entrance Examination reflected teachers' coaching skills rather than the abilities of their students. To ensure a fairer distribution, the Association requested that Perth Modern School places be allotted to inspectorial districts in proportion to their primary school populations. Rather than a formal examination, it wanted the awards made by head teachers and district inspectors after consideration of students' general academic performance. In justification of their stance, they reminded the Director that in 1932 and 1933, students from Perth Boys' School, Perth Girls' School, North Perth State School and Highgate State School had won thirty five percent of all scholarships and fifty percent of all entrances awarded to metropolitan pupils. When Clubb failed to respond to the Inglewood parents, the Teachers' Union, which had long been concerned about the unreliability of the examination, seized the initiative.¹⁹⁷

Rather than attempt to have the Education Department withdraw the examination, the Union sought to improve its reliability. The Union's Education Committee worked throughout 1934 on a weighting-for-age scheme that could be applied to examination results. It arranged with the Professor of Education at the University of Western Australia, Robert Cameron, for the use of University facilities to conduct research and, with his assistance, secured funding for the project from the ACER. Despite the undoubted professional status of the project Klein, who had succeeded Clubb as Director in 1936, was reluctant to give the Education Committee access to past examination results until approached directly by Cameron and the ACER.¹⁹⁸

With only the results from the years 1929 to 1935, the Committee devised a weighting-for-age scale that the Education Department tested for the first time in 1937. The results of the experiment persuaded the Union that the twenty-month age range allowed for candidates entering the Scholarship and Entrance Examination should be reduced to twelve months. Thus, all candidates would be expected to have their twelfth birthday in the calendar year of the examination and the weighting scale would compensate younger candidates.¹⁹⁹ The Education Department accepted the Union's proposals and in May 1936 gazetted regulations that implemented the scheme.²⁰⁰ The Union's work improved

the reliability of the examination but it did nothing to improve the inherent unfairness of the State's provision for secondary education in the metropolitan area.

Royal Commission to Enquire into Youth Unemployment and the Apprenticeship System

The recommendations of the report of the Royal Commission to Enquire into Youth Unemployment and the Apprenticeship System, chaired by Mr Justice Albert Asher Wolff, did not see problems in the State's provision for metropolitan students. Indeed, Wolff's recommendations simply endorsed the *status quo*. Like the Royal Commission chaired by Peter Board seventeen years before him, Wolff found secondary education well catered for in Western Australia. Like Board, he called for a strengthening of the central schools' role as providers of vocational education. Unlike Board, however, Wolff wanted central school students to spend more time studying English and mathematics, at the expense of cultural subjects such as history. To ensure that the primary schools, including the central schools, met the needs of business and industry, he recommended that the Education Department establish a permanent council with representatives from commerce and industry to oversee the primary school curriculum. Furthermore, in accordance with business and industry's reluctance to give up cheap child labour, he refused to consider raising the school-leaving age. Wolff's conservative recommendations mirrored the Royal Commission's terms of reference. The government wanted nothing more than some practical advice to solve the youth unemployment problem of the 1930s.²⁰¹

Clearly, Wolff did not understand that there was an unsatisfied demand for secondary education in the community. By 1939 the number of students remaining in central schools to complete Standard VIII had increased by fifty percent. In the same period the number staying on to complete the Junior Certificate year rose by twenty five percent. Enrolments at the Perth Technical School were also significant. By 1940 there were 162 fulltime day matriculation students in regular attendance, compared with 396 students of similar status in the State high schools.²⁰² That is, almost thirty percent of fulltime upper-secondary instruction in the Education Department was taking place away from high

schools. Moreover, it was taking place in the metropolitan area. With the declaration of war in Europe in September 1939, conditions for students in all State schools worsened dramatically. Only the patriotism of long-suffering teachers, parents and children made the situation tolerable.

Developing a multilateral high schools policy

Neither economic depression, parliamentary disapproval nor war could prevent two future Directors of Education from planning for the changes to secondary education that they recognised must come. The first to make his mark was the carpenter's son, Murray Little. Educated at Perth Boys' School and Claremont Teachers' College, he completed an Associateship and a Licentiate'ship with the College of Preceptors before enrolling at the University of Western Australia. There he completed a Bachelor of Arts degree with honours in English and Philosophy, a Master of Arts degree and a Diploma of Education. Shortly after, he was elevated suddenly and unexpectedly into the Director's office.²⁰³

At the Inspectors' Institute

At a meeting of the Inspectors' Institute in 1935 Murray Little proposed that all government school students should progress sequentially through primary, post-primary and secondary schooling. He described post-primary education as that which enabled its students to grow into socially effective individuals through participation in general educational activities. He wanted students who completed the course to have 'the ability to read discriminately, and for further information, the ability to keep an open mind and to discuss problems, [and] the ability to think'. In his view, universal post-primary education would be more effective in producing such individuals than was the current Education Department practice of differentiating between post-primary and secondary education in Standards VII, VIII and IX.²⁰⁴

Little opted for universal general post-primary education because he believed that only a tiny minority of students were developing their full potential in the central and high schools. In his opinion all State school students had the right to realise their talents, not just those with academic ability. The exercise of this right,

in his mind, depended on teachers being free to develop stimulating school and classroom environments in which students' unique abilities were recognised and allowed to blossom. He insisted that in such environments every subject and every activity was equally worthy of an individual's interest. As only teachers were in the position to recognise their students' interests and incorporate them into school classroom activities, he demanded that they alone have the freedom to develop suitable curricula, teaching methods and assessment procedures. In doing so, he claimed, teachers would necessarily place the psychological needs and interests of their students ahead of the requirements of the Public Examinations Board and employers.²⁰⁵

To accommodate his proposal, Little suggested an organisational structure to replace Andrews' ladder. Primary education would occupy six rather than seven years. Students would transfer from primary to post-primary school in the calendar year of their twelfth birthday. The post-primary school would have four grades. Students could then choose two-year vocational or academic courses in the secondary school. To ensure that as many students as possible benefited from post-primary education, Little recommended raising the school-leaving age to sixteen years and allowing students to move through school with their chronological peers.²⁰⁶

He made only one concession to contemporary practice in the central and high schools. As the Junior Certificate was a popular goal for many students, he conceded that it should remain but concluded that direct examination preparation should not be encouraged. For those students who chose to enter for the examination, preparation would be restricted to the final post-primary year. What is more, a pass in the examination would never be a prerequisite for transfer from post-primary to secondary school.²⁰⁷

By placing the welfare of post-primary students ahead of university and employer interests, Little challenged the foundations of State secondary education in Western Australia. No longer would high schools prepare an intellectual elite for matriculation, nor would the central schools provide sub-standard secondary education and rudimentary pre-vocational training for the mass of the student population. By acknowledging teachers as professional practitioners capable of developing their

own curricula and assessing their own students, Little questioned the role of every member of the Inspector's Institute and the Public Examinations Board. No longer would they be intellectual gatekeepers and guardians of academic standards. What Little wanted was nothing short of a revolution the put students' needs and interests ahead of economic and political considerations.

By the end of 1935 Little had hardened his opinion about the Junior Certificate examination. In a letter to the Director of Education he described it as a test of minimum competencies whose inflated standing in the community came from its use by inefficient employers to select their employees. He argued that by encouraging schools to prepare students for the examination, the Education Department was prostituting its educational mission. It was turning schools into 'examination [sweat] shops and students into sweated labour working to enhance the reputation of the Education Department. It was, in his opinion, a situation contrary to the fundamentals of good educational practice.²⁰⁸ Despite his progressive views, Little was appointed Director of Education in November 1940.²⁰⁹

The Teachers' Union and Thomas Robertson

Little's appointment coincided with the beginning of the first stage in the development of the Teachers' Union's multilateral high schools policy. From the moment the second future Director, Thomas Robertson, rose to address the Teachers' Union 1940 Conference, there was an atmosphere of expectation. He had recently returned to Western Australia after twelve months as a Carnegie Fellow at the University of London. No one else in the hall could claim the same experience. Speaking to a motion from the Midland Junction branch, he proposed a resolution calling for the Education Committee to consider the reorganisation of government secondary education. He argued that secondary education was sure to figure prominently in postwar reconstruction, as it was the weakest part of Western Australia's State education system. It followed that, if the Union had a practical policy already prepared, it would be in a position to influence educational planning once the war was over.²¹⁰

Robertson drew the conference's attention to planks already in the Union's platform that called for universal secondary education and equality of educational opportunity. No one, he said, could demonstrate that such equality existed in Western Australia. He then demolished the Union's secondary education policy. In his opinion, as long as the Union pursued a Hadow-oriented policy, equality of educational opportunity would be impossible to achieve. He informed delegates that while in England he had come to the conclusion that in those parts of England where the Hadow report's recommendations had been implemented, secondary education provision was discriminatory and deliberately undemocratic. Instead of Hadow, he recommended that the central and high schools be replaced with multilateral high schools. He preferred either 'the Scottish omnibus type of school in which, after a general training, children are drafted into various groups for specialisation', or the 'American comprehensive high school'. Adopting one or the other in Western Australia would eliminate the need for the High School Scholarship and Entrance Examination and remove Perth Modern School from its privileged position as the State's only selective high school. The conference carried Robertson's motion with acclamation and elected him to the Education Committee.²¹¹

At its October meeting, the Education Committee appointed a subcommittee to inquire into and report upon the reform of post-primary and secondary education in the State school system.²¹² The subcommittee's interim report was grounded on the principle that access to high school should be guaranteed for every primary school student.²¹³ Transfer to high school would occur in the calendar year of the student's thirteenth birthday. To accommodate this movement of students the subcommittee's preferred vehicle was the multilateral five-year high school. Its organisation was to be the same as that of the existing State high schools: a three-year junior section and a two-year senior section. It suggested that after completing a common first year, students should be streamed into two-year academic, commercial, industrial, domestic science, agricultural and fundamentals courses, the last being for students needing remedial instruction. To ensure that most students completed a junior secondary course, the subcommittee recommended that the school-leaving age be raised to sixteen years. Senior secondary schooling would continue to concentrate upon

the preparation of students for the Leaving Certificate examination.²¹⁴

Outside the metropolitan area, the subcommittee recommended the establishment of junior high schools whenever a minimum of 150 junior secondary students could be gathered together. Where this was impossible, it recommended attaching junior secondary classes to existing primary schools. To facilitate access to secondary education for isolated country students and those in small schools, it suggested the automatic payment of living-away-from-home allowances and the establishment of government hostels in rural centres.²¹⁵

The sub-committee wanted its policy implemented first in the metropolitan area where inequalities were the greatest. Central schools would be reclassified as junior high schools and provided with secondary-school facilities. In conjunction with this action, the subcommittee recommended that the entry examination to Perth Modern School be abolished. Without an annual intake of junior secondary school students to accommodate, the school could then be used as a senior high school for all metropolitan post-Junior Certificate students. The second stage in implementing the scheme involved the replacement of junior high schools in Perth and Fremantle with coeducational five-year high schools.²¹⁶

The Education Committee accepted the interim report, and added a further justification for the establishment of multilateral five-year high schools, which stated that:

as all types of children and all grades of intelligence are included within this school, it more closely resembles adult society than do the one or two course schools. Future workers of all types rub shoulders so that a child is receiving a real social education. Selective secondary schools for the intellectual elite are apt to give an artificial concept of society and develop castes. Similarly, one course junior technical and commercial schools, by their segregation, breed a sense of inferiority.²¹⁷

The Union's 1941 conference adopted the multilateral high schools policy and passed a vote of thanks to Robertson for his special contribution in preparing the report. Robertson meanwhile had entered the inspectorate and resigned his Union membership.²¹⁸

Robertson had first displayed a commitment to improving State secondary education in his 1936 Master of Arts thesis, which criticised the ability of public examiners to accurately grade students' papers accurately. His views were well publicised in Teachers' Union publications and in *The West Australian*. Two years later, while he was head teacher of Geraldton District High School, he exercised his conviction that multilateral high schools were the way of the future.²¹⁹ When the government approved the establishment of a high school in the town, he took it upon himself to advise the Director of Education that the opportunity now presented itself to open an experimental multilateral high school. This school would have academic, commercial, domestic, agricultural and technical courses.²²⁰ With Robertson already established in the town and well-positioned on the promotion list, such a school might well have been his, but as Acting Director, Hadley would have none of it. He ignored Robertson's unsolicited advice.

Later that year Robertson took up a Carnegie Fellowship to spend a year investigating 'the reorganization of post-primary education and the methods of selection and differentiation employed by English education authorities'.²²¹ It was this experience that honed his desire to introduce universal secondary education in multilateral high schools in Western Australia. In his report to the Carnegie Corporation after completing the fellowship, he outlined some of the features of the English secondary education system that he found disturbing. He described English public schools 'as purely vocational ... as any technical school' insofar as they prepared ruling class boys 'for the vocation of an English Gentleman, in the Tory sense.' The boys in these schools were, he suggested, only dimly aware of the existence of people outside their own class. They were manifestly unaware that the economic problems of these people, who formed the majority of the population, were 'England's real problem.' He concluded that the public schools existed for the 'preservation of a particular caste' and deplored the growth of 'imitations of these schools in the Dominions'.²²²

Robertson also found England's grammar schools, which were selective institutions, to be socially objectionable. He claimed that such schools quietened:

the potential leaders of unrest amongst the masses, by providing them with an education which, perhaps, means more congenial and lucrative employment, and more comfort and pleasure, than their start in life would seem to promise.²²³

He observed that some grammar school students, aware that their education would raise them above the mass of their peers, tended to identify with the ruling class rather than their own. The use of grammar schools to achieve this transfer of allegiance was, he believed, educationally inappropriate.

The central schools to which those students rejected by the grammar schools were relegated upset Robertson more than any other institution that he visited. In his opinion, they denied their students the hope of a better future. He wrote that:

of all parts of the educational system that I have observed, I most strongly dislike this type of school. It seems to me that the children necessarily go to these schools with a sense of inferiorityI object strongly to arbitrary decisions as to children's future occupations being made by examination at the early age of 11, at which age psychologists agree, many abilities have not even begun to show themselves. [These children are to] ... form part of the vast army of unskilled and partly skilled labour who will be, at the best of times, on the 'bread-line', and who will first feel the effects of trade depression by being thrown out of employment.

He could not stand by and see schools such as these, which were characteristic of the Victorian and New South Wales education systems, develop out of Western Australia's central schools.

Robertson was particularly critical of the *Report on Secondary Education*, prepared by the Board of Education Consultative Committee chaired by Sir William Spens and published in 1938. The Spens Committee's rejection of multilateral and comprehensive high schools as socially destabilising was, in his view, motivated by 'a policy intended to conserve the structure of society as it ... was in England.'²²⁴ Robertson asserted that the multilateral high school, open to all children in its particular neighbourhood, was the only democratic alternative to a class-based, exclusive secondary education system such as he had studied in England.²²⁵ He claimed

that the introduction in Western Australia of such schools was the only way to avoid bolstering the state's class system.²²⁶

Robertson's hostility to the competitive selection of students grew from his childhood and adolescence. Born in London in 1900, he migrated with his family to Australia in 1905. The family settled in Kalgoorlie in 1908 where his father, a commercial traveller, died in 1911. Left without means of support, his mother accepted employment at the Recreation Hotel at Boulder and sent he son to live with relatives in Perth so that he could attend Perth Boys' School. In 1913 and already in Standard VII he won a minor scholarship to Perth Modern School. Dependent largely upon the £10 scholars' allowance and £20 boarding allowance, Robertson could not afford the accoutrements and outings that his peers from financially comfortable families treated as normal. His school years were thus confined to study and school cadet activities. The experience lifted him out of his own class but gave him the ability to see the injustice of a school system which denied the vast majority of able students access to secondary school.²²⁷

Little and Robertson

After his unexpected elevation to the Director's office, Little set about trying to reform the State school system. Finance, however, was a perennial problem. Little canvassed the possibility of Commonwealth funding for State schools in the Education Department's 1940 annual report, albeit with little hope of success. He argued that contemporary warfare had become 'a struggle demanding intelligence, initiative and technical knowledge.' As such qualities were the outcomes of learning, warfare was not only a struggle between political ideologies but also between education systems. Education expenditure was thus defence expenditure and the responsibility of the Federal Government. He expanded his argument to include the role of science and technology in the postwar reconstruction of Western Australia, maintaining that in a world where industry was dependent on scientific knowledge, the adequate provision of science-teaching facilities was an urgent necessity. Without such facilities the technicians needed for postwar industrial development would be unavailable and Western Australia would be uncompetitive in the world economy.²²⁸ The parliament

was preoccupied with the war when the report was tabled in the Legislative Assembly in 1941 and ignored Little's argument. From 1942 onward, however, the reform of secondary education became part of the State's postwar reconstruction planning activities.

Little's first step in developing a postwar secondary education policy was, paradoxically, to discourage the Minister for Education, Walter Kitson, from raising the school-leaving age. Kitson had sought Little's views after noting that the 1940 New South Wales *Youth Welfare Act* raised the school-leaving age from fourteen to fifteen years in three annual steps beginning in 1940. Little advised Kitson that it would be impossible to implement such legislation in Western Australia, as the Education Department could not provide decent classrooms or adequate facilities for those children already attending school.²²⁹ Nevertheless, in September 1943 Little supported Kitson's Education Act Amendment Bill, which empowered the government to raise the school-leaving age to fifteen by proclamation at an appropriate time. Kitson explained that:

the Education Department has to prepare for an increase of between 5,000 and 6,000 post-primary students and this will require, besides an increased number of teachers, an extensive building programme. It also entails a revision and adjustment of the curriculum ... the government hopes that this long needed reform will be implemented at the earliest possible moment.²³⁰

Proclamation bought the Education Department time to develop its secondary education policy and placed an obligation on the government to provide appropriate accommodation and teaching facilities before instituting the higher school-leaving age. It also opened the door to interest groups to push for better educational provision.

In December 1943 Little told a deputation from the Teachers' Union waiting on the Minister for Education, John Tonkin, that any intelligent citizen could see that the central schools were not designed as part of a system committed to the provision of equal educational opportunity. He then informed the meeting that all future government secondary schools would be coeducational,

multilateral high schools built on sites that had already been selected in the suburbs. Consistent with the progressive approach to curriculum expressed in his 1935 paper, he foreshadowed that once a higher school-leaving age and adequate facilities were in place, the Education Department would introduce a core curriculum complemented by a wide variety of optional subjects for lower-secondary classes. To accommodate the new curriculum, students would no longer be prepared for the Junior Certificate examination, but would receive school-assessed Leaving Certificates at the end of their fourth high school year.²³¹

Little developed his reform plans at a meeting of the Inspectors' Institute in January 1944. It must have been a shock to that conservative body when the Director told them that the central and high schools would merge in an enlarged Secondary Education Branch requiring a new system of inspection for secondary schools. He added that committees would be established to develop a core curriculum for the lower secondary school and when the new curriculum was in place, Junior Certificate preparation would be withdrawn from State schools. Once again the inspectors were spared Little's revolution, this time by the ongoing accommodation problem. Until a building program to house the inevitable increase in enrolments when the school-leaving age was raised could be implemented, Little's ambition would be just a departmental policy.²³²

After the neglect of the 1930s and the material shortages imposed by the war, Little had some difficulty in determining his building priorities, for every item was urgent. Nevertheless, he informed the government's Building Reference Committee that in the short term the Department's policy was 'to develop post-primary education units in the suburbs which will enable the Department to progressively eliminate outmoded buildings now in the centre of the city.'²³³ In line with this, he recommended the construction of schools at Midland Junction, Fremantle, Hollywood and Mount Hawthorn. The Minister added Mount Lawley, South Perth and Como to the list.²³⁴

As the war drew to a close, Little applied for Robertson's release from the Army Education Service, claiming him as an essential Education Department officer.²³⁵ When the Deputy Director of Manpower recommended the release, Little telegraphed the news

to Robertson in Melbourne. His intervention was premature. The Prime Minister, John Curtin, asked the Premier to allow Robertson to remain in the service of the Commonwealth. The Universities' Commission and the Ministry of Postwar Reconstruction wanted him to participate in the preparation of a joint Commonwealth-State plan for the re-training and re-establishment of teachers. Recognising that such a plan could benefit Western Australia, Little acquiesced.²³⁶ Robertson returned to Western Australia briefly in April 1945.²³⁷ His secondment to the Commonwealth Reconstruction Training Scheme came through almost immediately and he was sent to London to establish a Training Committee to work with ex-prisoners of war and other service personnel pending their return to Australia.²³⁸ He returned to the Education Department in September of the same year.²³⁹

Rather than reinstate Robertson to his prewar position as Inspector of Schools in the Central District, Little assigned him to prepare a plan for the implementation of the multilateral high schools policy. The outcome was 'A General Outline of Proposals for the Amalgamation of Post Primary and Secondary Education'. Robertson's aim was:

to remove the differences between that type of secondary education which is given in High Schools and other types—technical, commercial, agricultural etc.—differences which have tended to cause High School education to be considered a superior type and the other types as inferior types.²⁴⁰

The evidence of this inferiority, which concerned Robertson, included dilapidated central school buildings, equipment and furniture, unsuitable school grounds, excessively large classes, shorter vacations and a limited range of subjects.²⁴¹ Robertson expressed the view that the coeducational multilateral high school, which would meet the needs of all students within their own communities, was the ideal model into which the central schools and Perth Modern School could be subsumed. In the long term, he envisaged a series of three-year and five-year multilateral high schools throughout the suburbs with the former feeding senior students into the latter. Once such schools were established, every student in a neighbourhood, including 'the backward child', would

be admitted to the local high school as a right rather than as a privilege.²⁴²

Robertson acknowledged that the transition from parallel post-primary and secondary schools to uniform secondary education in multilateral high school was 'a wholesale reform' that would have to be implemented in stages.²⁴³ This being so, he repeated the Union's earlier recommendation that the Education Department should begin by reclassifying the metropolitan central schools as junior high schools and then upgrade their facilities to high school standard. He believed the provision of these facilities was essential, as:

one of the main reasons why parents feel that their children, in attending the present central schools, receive an inferior brand of secondary education is that many of the impressive minor items of the High School are lacking in the Central Schools. The lack of lockers, bicycle accommodation, oiled floors, linoleum in corridors, lawns and garden plots, playing fields, dressing sheds, showers, even modern black-boards and better furniture and so on, has a marked effect in creating a feeling that education in central schools is inferior to that given in the High Schools.²⁴⁴

He felt that placing such amenities and equipment in reclassified central schools would give an immense psychological boost to students and their parents and cost very little.

Once material standards in the newly classified junior high schools reached high school level, Robertson proposed that Perth Modern School cease to select its students and, in common with other multilateral high schools, recruit its first year students from adjacent primary schools.²⁴⁵ In the short term, however, competitive selection of Modern School students would have to continue so that no unfair advantage accrued to students from adjacent primary schools. He also advised that the single-sex, junior technical and commercial schools—Perth Junior Technical School, Mt Lawley Junior Technical School which opened in 1945 and Perth Girls' Central School—should remain until superseded by new suburban multilateral high schools. For the central schools at Midland Junction and Claremont, which still had primary classes attached,

he recommended division into separate primary and three-year high schools.²⁴⁶

Robertson wanted rural primary schools with thirty or more post-primary students to be supervised by the Secondary Education Branch but he recommended that no other changes be made until the effects of a means-tested living-away-from-home allowance on their enrolments could be evaluated. In conformity with the Union's policy, this allowance would be part of a new approach to the distribution of government financial aid for secondary school students needing to live away from home to study.²⁴⁷ Robertson reasoned that such aid should be distributed as 'part of the State's normal provision for secondary education' rather than as part of a reward system for academic performance. Secondary education was to be the right of every student no matter where they lived.²⁴⁸

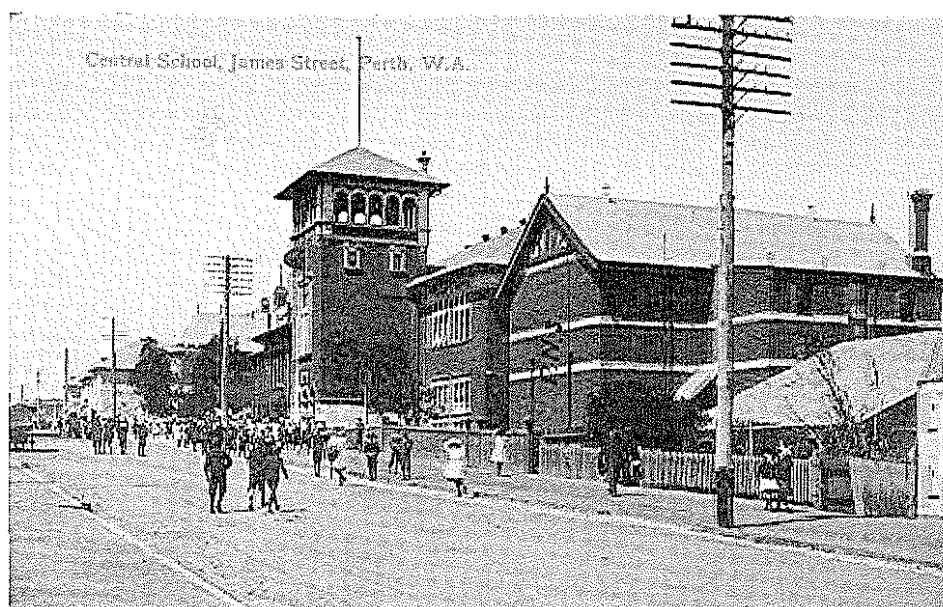
To manage the more complex education system that would result from the introduction of multilateral high schools, Robertson proposed changes to the Education Department's administrative structure. These included replacing the office of Chief Inspector of Schools with two superintendencies, one to head the Primary Education Branch and the other the Secondary Education Branch. The Superintendent of Secondary Education would replace the dual appointment of Principal of Perth Modern School and Inspector of High Schools, which dated from Andrews' administration. Robertson also wished one of the two superintendents to act as Deputy Director of Education.²⁴⁹

Little, who was concerned about political reaction to the metropolitan focus of Robertson's report, added the establishment of five-year high schools at Merredin, Manjimup and Narrogin and three-year high schools in the intermediate towns of Busselton, Harvey, Bridgetown, Pemberton and Katanning. As with the metropolitan area, these junior schools would feed senior students into the upper-secondary classes of nearby five-year high schools. To encourage the movement of students from the three-year to the five-year schools he adopted an earlier Union recommendation to open government hostels in conjunction with the high schools.²⁵⁰ Clearly, Robertson drew much of the content of this report from the ideas of his superior and the work he did while part of the Teachers' Union Education Committee. Unlike Little, however, Robertson avoided the issue of curriculum reform.



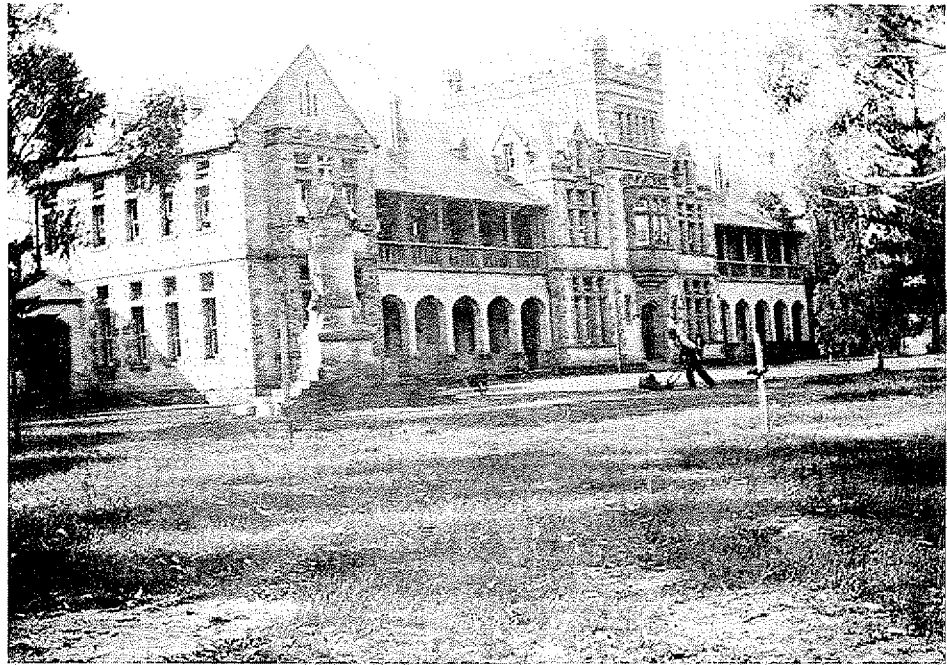
Perth Normal School students 1908-1909

The students, who gained most marks in the selection examination for monitors (student teachers), were given two years secondary education. They then spent one year as monitors before entering the Training College. The respectability of teaching as an occupation helps to explain the preponderance of female students. *[Photo courtesy of Merle Crute]*



Perth Normal School in James Street 1908

Perth Normal School is the first school building on the right of the picture. Perth Boys' School and Perth Girls' School are visible to the left of the Normal School. *[Photo courtesy of Merle Crute]*



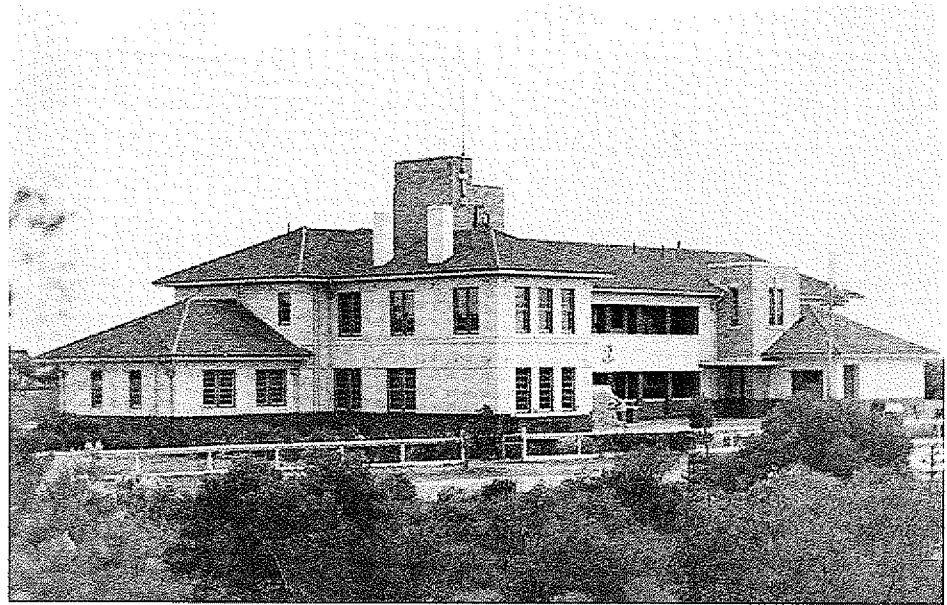
Claremont Teachers' College 1926

[Photo Courtesy of the estate of Jean Sloman]



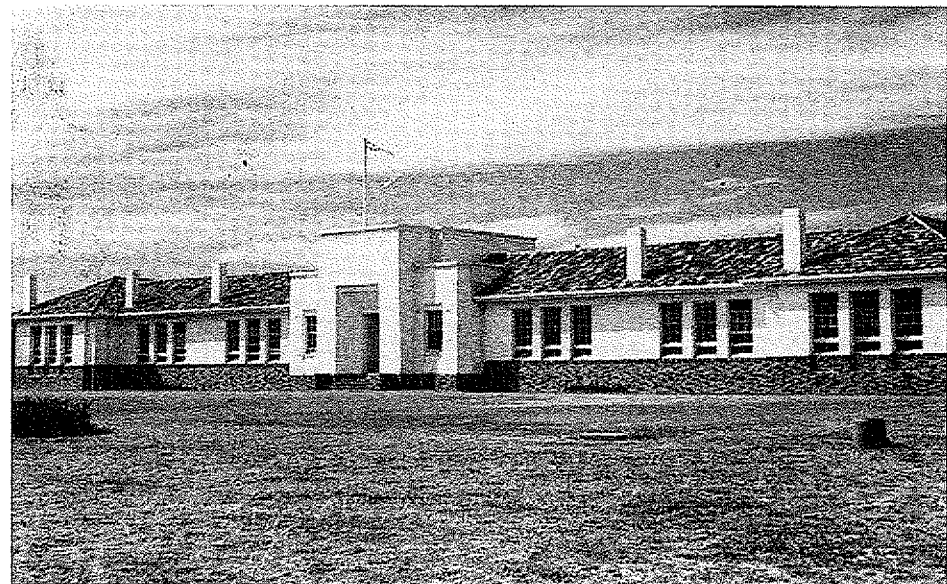
Perth Modern School 1923

Perth Modern School was the only five-year State high school in the metropolitan area until 1952. *[Photo Courtesy of the estate of Jean Sloman]*



Geraldton High School 1939

This school was the last of five rural high schools built before World War II.
[Photo courtesy of Glen Cornish]



Kent Street Central School 1940

This school was built to relieve gross overcrowding in the James Street schools in the 1930s. *[Photo courtesy of C Sims]*



Geraldton High School Prefects 1946

At the end of World War II clothing was still rationed. School uniforms were out of the question for most families. [Photo courtesy of Mary Roskins]

Postwar reconstruction and community demand

Robertson's proposals were written at the mid-point of an education reform movement unlike anything before it in Western Australia. From the early 1940s the concept of postwar reconstruction invigorated the demand for education reform. The various organizations involved, however, seldom spoke with one voice. Many rural-based organisations, for example, campaigned for the establishment of area schools, similar to those in Tasmania, for country students who desired a distinctly rural post-primary curriculum. At the same time, other rural organisations demanded academic State high schools in their towns. Urban-based organisations such as the Teachers' Union and the Parent Education Movement supported calls for improved access to State high schools for country children but their first priority was to improve conditions for metropolitan students whose opportunities to transfer from primary to secondary school were far fewer than their country peers.²⁵¹ The problem for the reformers was to build a united movement.

At the 1941 Teachers' Union conference, the Parent Education Movement's organiser Alex King requested funding to publish a pamphlet outlining inadequacies in the government's provision for State school students. After viewing the draft pamphlet, the Conference agreed to contribute £100 toward the cost of publication as part of the Union's ongoing campaign to raise public awareness of the need for educational reform.²⁵² Nevertheless, the matter came to a halt at this point because King had also submitted a draft to the Commonwealth Department of Labour and National Service as part of a series of pamphlets to stimulate discussion about aspects of the reconstruction and development of postwar Australian society. The Commonwealth authorities submitted the draft to the Western Australian Premier's Office for comment.²⁵³ When asked for his opinion, Little advised against publication. He took exception to King's claim that Western Australian State schools were designed to produce a compliant working class willing to fill menial occupations. Little agreed that this was so in the past but claimed that under his administration State school teachers were expected to encourage their students to think critically about the society in which they lived.²⁵⁴

Shortly afterwards, the Teachers' Union also postponed its plans to publish the pamphlet. With Japanese planes bombing northern Australian towns the president, Edwin Huck, who was also a prominent member of the Returned Sailors', Soldiers' and Airmen's Imperial League of Australia, felt that the appearance of a critical tract might be construed as unpatriotic. The Union's 1942 conference therefore voted to suspend publication until the threat of Japanese invasion had abated.²⁵⁵ One year later the Union felt sufficiently confident of victory to commit itself to a reform campaign that included the publication of King's pamphlet.

In the pamphlet King condemned the central schools, criticising the poor physical condition of the buildings, the overcrowded classrooms, the inadequate school grounds and the restricted post-primary curriculum. In his opinion, the central schools exemplified the rural bias of State secondary education policy. He pointed out quite rightly that country students had simply to pass their Standard VI annual examination before entering high school, while only two percent of city students were admitted to Perth Modern School. The practice of selecting city high school students by examination was, in his opinion, inequitable and educationally unsound. If so few metropolitan students continued to enter high school, the government's intention to develop a strong, industrially based economy supported by a skilled work force in postwar Western Australia would be rendered impracticable.²⁵⁶ The Teachers' Union published two supporting pamphlets relating to secondary education. The basic theme in each was a call for equal and universal access to State high schools. By equality of access the Union meant the means-tested provision of financial assistance at a level sufficient to enable all students who completed Standard VI to enrol in a government high school.²⁵⁷

The Teachers' Union's 1945 conference held just as the war against Japan drew to a close, instructed its Executive Committee to organise a conference of community representatives to heighten public awareness of the need for educational reform. Called the Citizen's Education Conference, it took place in May 1946. Delegates came from trade unions, local government, and primary producers' organisations, the Women's Service Guild, the Advance Education Movement of Western Australia, the local branch

of the British Medical Association, political parties and local progress associations as well as members of the general public. The reforms that the Conference canvassed all required greater federal and state government expenditure so, to place the greatest possible pressure on them, the Conference asked delegates to participate in an intensive publicity campaign.²⁵⁸

The Teachers' Union responded by appointing its general secretary, Robert Featherstone, as Campaign Organiser. His brief was to inform the community of the urgent necessity for educational reform. Featherstone spoke on national and commercial radio stations, wrote press releases and toured country districts from Geraldton to Kalgoorlie and south to Albany. Wherever he went he found support for increased government expenditure on education.²⁵⁹

As an extension of Featherstone's efforts, in 1946 the Union established the Progressive Education League. Its sole purpose was to push for federal funding for State education.²⁶⁰ Four issues had intensified public interest in the possibility of such funding. When the 1941 Uniform Taxation Act removed income-taxing powers from the states, it made the Commonwealth Government a logical provider of funds for education and the target of the Australian Teachers' Federation's 'New Deal for Education' campaign. The Commonwealth's wartime use of State technical education for the Commonwealth Technical Training Scheme, which trained military and defence industries personnel between 1940 and 1945, had made Western Australian interest groups aware of the material advantages to be gained from federal government involvement. The first education debate in the Federal Parliament, initiated by the Leader of the Opposition, Robert Menzies, raised hopes for bipartisan support for federal financial involvement. Finally, the passage of the Chifley government's Commonwealth Education Act in 1945 seemed to confirm that a new era in education provision was dawning.²⁶¹

A well-attended Progressive Education League rally at the Perth Town Hall in September 1946 called for the Commonwealth government to take the initiative. The speakers included federal parliamentarians, trade unionists, the Vice Chancellor of the University of Western Australia George Currie and the Professor of Education Robert Cameron. Everyone called on the Commonwealth

government to fund directly every level of State education.²⁶² Following this rally, the League continued its campaign, but it quickly became obvious that the Western Australian government believed that direct Commonwealth funding would see it lose control of its education system. States' rights was not a matter that the League wished to confront so, rather than fight for a lost cause, it disbanded in 1949.²⁶³ Its demise marked the end of the wartime and immediate postwar activities of the public reform movement in Western Australia.

Little alone

When Robertson left the Education Department to become an assistant director in the Commonwealth Office of Education in 1945, Little continued the battle for improvements to State secondary education in the metropolitan area. He was keenly aware of Western Australia's need for federal financial support and urged Tonkin to seek federal funds for State education through the Australian Education Council, the voice of state education ministers in their relationship with the Commonwealth government.²⁶⁴ Little also made a detailed submission to the Commonwealth Grants Commission in which he stated his hope to reclassify the central schools as three-year high schools in 1946. He pointed out that the facilities of the central schools were plainly inferior to those in the high schools, and claimed that such unequal provision was inappropriate in a democratic society such as Australia. His request for funding to remedy the disparity failed, as he knew it must. The Commission was not empowered to take matters of social justice into consideration. Despite their post-primary task, the central schools were primary schools and as such they were 'not appreciably below that of the other States'. Additional funding was out of the question but by making his point Little publicised the inequity of the Commission's approach.²⁶⁵

Despite not being able to access much needed funding, the government went ahead and reclassified the ten metropolitan central schools as three-year high schools in July 1946.²⁶⁶ Two of the schools were also renamed: Perth Girls' Central School became the Girdlestone High School and Mount Lawley Junior Technical School became the John Forrest Junior Technical High

School.²⁶⁷ The reclassification increased the number of metropolitan high schools from one to eleven and the number of metropolitan high school students from 634 to 5,361. Overall, the number of State high schools rose from seven to eleven and the number of students from 2,910 to 6,960.²⁶⁸

The reclassification also made necessary a number of organisational changes. The Education Department's *Regulations* were amended to provide for three-year high schools with a required minimum annual average attendance of 150 students rather than an enrolment of 150 as Andrews' regulations specified. Such a small number of students had no relevance in the metropolitan area where the reclassified central schools all had enrolments well in excess of this target. It was rather an expression of support for the consolidation of small schools in larger country towns. The three-year high schools were staffed by the simple expedient of creating a set of promotional positions and then transferring central school teachers from their Primary Branch positions to equivalent positions in the Secondary Branch. The amendments also included two classes of five-year high schools, the larger requiring a minimum annual average attendance of 400 students in the lower school and 70 in the upper school and the smaller, corresponding attendances of 300 and 40.²⁶⁹

Administrative changes included the abolition of the office of the Chief Inspector of Schools and the transfer of its duties to two superintendencies. Victor Box was appointed Superintendent of Secondary Education and Thomas Edmondson Superintendent of Primary Education and Deputy Director of Education. The addition of two inspectorial positions, one to the Primary Branch and the other in the Secondary Branch, completed the reforms.²⁷⁰ These were the changes that Robertson recommended in 1945. Without a real increase in the stock of secondary schools in the metropolitan area, however, these changes were essentially cosmetic.

Little's failure to convince the government to build at least one more metropolitan high school prior to his retirement was due to a combination of factors. There was an acute postwar shortage of building materials, which was exacerbated by the need to house increasing numbers of primary school students. Between 1945 and 1950 the government spent £547,672 on primary school buildings and just £27,059 on high school buildings, although the high school

population grew by 2,353 students.²⁷¹ The accommodation problem was exacerbated by Little's decision to press ahead with the consolidation of rural schools. One hundred and seventy eight small schools were closed and the number of schools with more than 200 students rose by forty-two between 1946 and 1950. Little knew that consolidation would ultimately reduce expenditure on primary education, but in the short term it was an expensive exercise.²⁷²

The election of a Liberal-Country Party coalition government led by Ross McLarty in 1947 was a further frustration for Little. As a member of the Country Party, the new Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Arthur Watts, was more interested in furthering educational opportunities for country students than in providing for their city counterparts. In fact, he told a delegation from the Progressive Education League that the government's first aim in education was to bring the material standard in every country primary and secondary school up to the best available in the metropolitan area, meaning Perth Girls' School and Perth Modern School. The fact that the 1947 census had indicated that sixty percent of all Western Australians lived in the metropolitan area was irrelevant. Watts' commitment to the Country Party's constituents was such that he simply could not acknowledge the delegation's evidence that conditions in the reclassified central schools were deplorable or that the state's capital needed more than one five-year high school.²⁷³

The Minister's attitude left Little in a ludicrous bind. Distaste for the manifestly inferior facilities and overcrowded classrooms in the reclassified central schools was such that demand for Modern School places soared. To control the situation Little was forced to introduce a qualifying examination for the Scholarship and Entrance examination. In 1948 the first Standard VI students were required to pass an examination to compete for the right to sit for the second examination.²⁷⁴

In the same year, the problem of providing metropolitan high school accommodation was further complicated when Watts sought to establish high schools at Narrogin, Merredin, Manjimup, Katanning and Harvey. Little was absent at the time, attending a UNESCO conference in Beirut. The Acting Director Thomas Edmondson was reluctant to commit the Education Department to such a questionable undertaking. He wrote to his superior asking

for advice. Little replied that he saw no immediate need for such schools since none of the schools in the five towns had yet attained the required average annual post-primary attendance of 150. He therefore instructed Edmondson that:

it is better when the post-primary numbers warrant any country centres to raise the school to a 2A or 3A as a transition school to wait the building of a five year high school, This could easily be done in Narrogin, Katanning, Harvey Manjimup and Merredin, in that order. This would make them in the category of special schools with the head teacherships advertised, thus providing openings for primary men to graduate to secondary and secondary assistants to seek experience as heads. The post primary stages of these schools could be put on an allowance to bring them equivalent to secondary, but re time and vacations, they would remain primary. This is the trend in the United Kingdom, and I am sure it will be the trend with us.²⁷⁵

Edmondson advised Watts of Little's suggestion and warned him that to build and maintain separate high schools for the small numbers of students involved would be extremely expensive.²⁷⁶

Following Little's return in April 1949, Watts accepted his suggestion to call the post-primary classes in these schools secondary classes. He insisted, however, that if the schools had secondary classes they should be called high schools, to enhance their prestige. Consequently, in 1950 the Narrogin, Merredin, Manjimup, Katanning and Harvey State Schools became junior high schools.²⁷⁷ The Education Department thus reverted to a policy remarkably similar to Andrews' district high schools policy of 1916. Moreover, like the district high schools, the five original junior high schools all eventually became five-year high schools. Under Robertson's direction after 1951, however, subsequent junior high schools were not established as transitional institutions. Instead, they became educational assets in their own right in country towns with small but stable secondary-age student populations. By 1957 there were twenty-nine such schools, which relieved some of the political pressure for the provision of additional country high schools and freed resources for the relief of the accommodation crisis that developed in metropolitan high schools early in the 1950s.²⁷⁸

Meanwhile, unable to resolve the accommodation problem in the high schools, Little turned his attention to the secondary school curriculum. In 1948 the Teachers' Union had discussed the possibility of introducing accreditation in the lower-secondary school with Little. At the time he pointed out that the folly of acting without the support of Western Australia's employers.²⁷⁹ Twelve months later he proposed an experimental accredited award for non-academic students with assessments based on four core subjects—English, social studies, practical mathematics and general science—and a variety of socially and vocationally oriented optional subjects.²⁸⁰ Most of the employer organisations and individual employers approached by the Education Department accepted the award in principle for unskilled positions and apprenticeships. As Little had anticipated, however, they refused to countenance an Education Department-accredited award as a qualification for junior white-collar positions.²⁸¹

Called the High School Third Year Certificate and later the Third Year High School Certificate or more often the High School Certificate, its experimental introduction began in 1951 under the supervision of the Superintendent of Secondary education. Between 1955, when the Education Department first began keeping systematic statistics on the course, and 1957 632 certificates were awarded.²⁸² The community never fully accepted the award as an alternative qualification to the more prestigious Junior Certificate. In 1959 Robertson, who was Little's successor, informed the ACER that the award's future was in doubt, as he hoped shortly to introduce a new form of certification for all lower-secondary students.²⁸³ His hope was without substance. The Education Department retained the High School Certificate until 1970, when it and the Junior Certificate were phased out in favour of the Achievement Certificate.²⁸⁴

Robertson and the rocky road to adequate accommodation in the metropolitan area

In 1950 Robert Menzies led the Liberal Party to the front benches in the national parliament. One of his first acts as Prime Minister was to close the Commonwealth Office of Education. Robertson found himself looking to return to Western Australia where, with

Little's support, he defeated more favoured candidates to succeed his mentor as Director of Education. When he took over the office in 1951, he was faced with 11,230 secondary school students housed in schools scarcely changed since 1940 when he was headmaster of the Midland Junction Central School.²⁸⁵ But with postwar building material shortages, in the short term there was no way that any government could remedy the situation.

It was also obvious by 1951 that the administrative changes Little implemented immediately after the war could not manage the predicted postwar rise in enrolments. One of Robertson's first acts was to tackle this problem. He renamed the Primary, Secondary and Technical Branches as Divisions, introduced a Teacher Training Division, and persuaded the government to appoint superintendents to administer them. The four divisions were served by specialist branches, comprising Research, Recruitment and Personnel, Commonwealth Activities, Visual Education, Curriculum Research, Guidance and Handicapped Children, Youth and Physical Education, Home Science and Manual Training, each of which was administered by a specialist superintendent who was assisted by advisory teachers. In keeping with this nomenclature, district inspectors became district superintendents. The new administrative organisation was a classical hierarchical structure that removed the Director's office from the minutiae of routine decision making. More importantly, it was also one that could be expanded horizontally and vertically with very little disruption as the school population grew.²⁸⁶

In the schools, gender specific descriptions replaced the neutral language of the past. Robertson's regimen would not confuse roles and identities. Teaching assistants became masters or mistresses. Senior assistants became senior masters or first mistresses. Primary school head teachers became headmasters or head mistresses. Only high school headmasters and head mistresses retained their titles. Ostensibly, the changes reflected a new flexible style of supervision.²⁸⁷ However, the retention of classroom examinations by superintendents to award teaching marks for promotion and salary scale increments made a mockery of the exercise. The freedom and flexibility that the New Education Fellowship had looked for in Australian schools a decade earlier would not appear while Robertson was at the helm of the Education Department.

Robertson also reclassified every State school. All country primary schools with more than twenty-five secondary students became junior high schools. The three existing classes of high school were replaced with a scheme based on units of responsibility. The standard high school became one with between 150 and 600 lower-secondary school students. Schools with up to 150 upper-secondary students and those with more than 600 lower-secondary students were awarded two units of responsibility. Additional units were awarded for larger upper-secondary enrolments and for schools used for teacher training or for educational research. The purpose of the exercise was to aid the equitable allocation of resources and build a promotion path for staff in the Secondary Division.²⁸⁸

In addition to his work on the organisational structure of the Education Department, Robertson brought desperately needed reform to the teacher-training system. In doing so he reversed a decision Little made in 1949 while devising staffing formulas for high schools and regulations to cover the promotional positions created by the reclassification of the central schools. Little recognised that there would be a shortfall in the supply of secondary school teachers unless changes were made to the way in which the Education Department trained its teachers, yet he acquiesced in Edmondson's claim that:

to allow a student from Teachers' College to enter the high schools and stay there, even for one year is, in my opinion quite wrong. Such action will engender unrest in the service because the Department has stated, through the Principal of the Training College, that its policy is for all students to commence their careers in the primary service. Appointment immediately to the high school service will establish a privileged class in the service and ... widen the gap already existing between the primary and secondary service.²⁸⁹

With the Education Department already finding it difficult to recruit monitors and with rapidly growing primary and secondary school enrolments, Edmondson's case was nonsensical. Service in the poorly equipped and overcrowded ex-central schools was not a privilege. Furthermore, variations in the pay and conditions between the primary and secondary service were not sufficient

to attract staff into the high schools, where promotional positions were limited.²⁹⁰

Faced with the problem of obtaining staff quickly Robertson amended the Education Department's *Regulations* to allow newly trained teachers to be appointed directly to high schools. He also called on ex-teachers, who were generally married women no longer eligible to pursue a career on the permanent staff 'to register for such service as they could give'.²⁹¹ So desperate was the situation that he also set up a three-year primary teacher-training course for mature-age students with Junior Certificates, abolished the monitorial system and transferred all serving monitors to the Teachers' Training College.²⁹²

The reorganisation of Claremont Teachers' Training College courses that followed led to the first systematic pre-service training of government high school teachers in Western Australia. In 1952 University graduates were recruited into the Post-Graduate Certificate of Education, which became the Diploma of Education in 1956. It was a one-year professional course conducted jointly by the Teachers' College and the University of Western Australia.²⁹³ Potential high school teachers who entered the training college before graduating were permitted to complete their degrees and then go on to the Diploma course. Matriculants whose marks suggested they had the ability to pursue university studies were encouraged to enrol in arts and science degree courses, but only in subjects relevant to the Education Department's curriculum requirements.²⁹⁴

In an attempt to persuade more high school students to consider a teaching career, Robertson persuaded the government to introduce a teacher-training bursary scheme. Awarded by the Education Department on the basis of an interview and the applicants' Junior Certificate examination marks, the bursary provided £80 *per annum* and a £50 *per annum* living-away-from-home allowance for the final two years of high school. In return for the financial assistance each recipient agreed to undertake a teacher-training course after sitting for the Leaving Certificate examination. These awards, which were quite generous, allowed many students without the means to finish high school to aspire to a teaching career. Initially the Education Department made 250 awards annually, but when the Graylands Teachers' College opened in 1955 it increased the number to 350.²⁹⁵

Robertson viewed his reforms to the recruitment and training of teachers as highly successful, so much so that in 1955 he reported that:

the supply of teachers will have improved to such an extent that it is considered that, given sufficient accommodation, the school leaving-age could be raised by stages to 15 years to conform to the statutory provision made as long ago as 1943.²⁹⁶

It was a pipe dream. There was barely enough accommodation for existing enrolments, which grew from 9,180 in 1951 to 22,178 in 1958. In the meantime primary school enrolments jumped from 60 844 to 88 448. Families with young children were moving from inner-city locations to new suburbs north and south of the Swan River. Quite properly, governments had to make the provision of primary schools for these children its first priority. By the late 1940s the exodus to the suburbs had emptied classrooms in Subiaco, Victoria Park and East Perth. The classroom accommodation left behind was put to good use by nearby high schools, but as secondary enrolments and retention rates continued to climb it was not enough.²⁹⁷

Just a month after Robertson's appointment, the Superintendent of Secondary Education Victor Box had informed him that the accommodation situation in the high schools was deteriorating at an alarming rate.²⁹⁸ Six months later Box pointed out that there was a shortfall of forty-two classrooms, which was the equivalent of an entire high school for 1,500 students. Moreover, as a consequence of the government's commitment to construct five-year high schools at Narrogin and Collie, there was little chance of building another high school in the city. In his opinion, a state of emergency existed.²⁹⁹ Robertson told his minister that the government had not provided any additional accommodation for post-primary or secondary students in the metropolitan area since the opening of the Kent Street Central School in 1940. As far as Watts was concerned, there was no need for more accommodation in the city while some country children did not yet have access to a nearby high schools. But as a sop to the new Director, he allowed the Kent Street school to be reclassified as a five-year high school.³⁰⁰ A public outcry followed and Watts condescended

to allocate ten prefabricated classrooms to the Kent Street School to remedy some of the shortfall in accommodation in the suburbs around Victoria Park.³⁰¹

Unfortunately for the government, Watts learned little from the Kent Street experience. His pre-election news release later in the year revealed that rather than deal with the accommodation shortage in the metropolitan area, the government intended to divert funds to build more country high schools and junior high schools.³⁰² The Liberal-Country Party government's failure to attend to a general shortage of facilities in the metropolitan area, including in secondary education, played a significant part in the government's defeat in the February 1953 election.³⁰³

The Labor victory returned John Tonkin to the education portfolio in which he had previously approved Little's multilateral high schools policy. Immediately after taking office, Tonkin called for a report on the accommodation situation in the metropolitan high schools.³⁰⁴ Robertson informed Tonkin that there was an immediate shortage of sixty-three classrooms and cautioned that the impact of the rising birthrate after 1942 would be felt in the high schools from 1954 onwards. He estimated that the Education Department would have to find accommodation for an additional 1,000 students in 1955 and for approximately 2,000 more each year for an indefinite period thereafter. To begin to provide for these students, he recommended that the government make an immediate start on the construction of high schools at Mount Lawley, Armadale, Fremantle and Midland Junction. The schools would be constructed in stages over the ensuing three to five years, with each stage being occupied on completion so that at the end of construction the school would emerge from the building site as a fully functioning institution.³⁰⁵

The Public Works Department (PWD) opposed the project. It conceded that high school construction 'might receive attention' in 1954, but pointed out that other departments also had problems.³⁰⁶ The PWD's reluctance reflected serious doubts about the availability of finance. The Commonwealth Grants Commission had recommended a significant reduction in its 1952-53 special grant to Western Australia because of its excessive expenditure on social services. Significantly, the Commission identified the McLarty-Watts government's policy of establishing and maintaining small,

relatively inefficient high and junior high schools in country districts as a significant factor in that excess.³⁰⁷

Robertson was alarmed. The situation in the metropolitan area was already critical. He informed the Minister that:

in view of the news that the Commonwealth Government is unable to provide Western Australia with additional assistance by the way of loan monies, I desire to draw your attention to the very serious position in which this Department will find itself next year in regard to accommodation for secondary school pupils in the metropolitan area ... Practically all accommodation which can be classed as 'emergency' (offices, hired halls, hat rooms, spare rooms in primary school in areas where the population is depleted) has already been put to use. My earlier proposals for the commencement of major High Schools immediately at:-

- Mt Lawley
- Fremantle, and
- Midland Junction,

to be commenced in stages of so many rooms per year for the next three years would provide the necessary accommodation but only if an immediate commencement were made at these three centres.

The position will not improve of itself as 1954 will see the admission into secondary schools of the first wave of the increased birth rate which commenced in 1942. By 1956 the position will, indeed, be untenable if something is not started immediately and carried through to completion ... The needs of this Department are in the vicinity of 300 to 350 classrooms with ancillaries, costing something over £1 million.³⁰⁸

Robertson pointed out to the Minister that at the Conference of Directors of Education held in Brisbane in February 1953 he had found no other government education system in such a desperate plight as Western Australia's. He therefore recommended that the State make an immediate approach to the Commonwealth to secure additional loan monies, adding that:

I have come to the conclusion that if rooms for high schools cannot be built it will be necessary for certain groups of children in some of the metropolitan High Schools to work shifts ... There would be considerable dissatisfaction aroused amongst parents and teachers at such an arrangement.³⁰⁹

The implied political threat was obvious. The government would suffer electoral consequences if it let the situation deteriorate any further.

The *Electoral Districts Act of 1947* helped to make Robertson's threat real. The act reckoned two metropolitan voters were the equivalent of one non-metropolitan voter. With more and more of the state's population settling in the metropolitan area, the number of metropolitan electorates had grown. The redistribution in 1948 netted the city three additional seats, giving the metropolitan area forty percent of Legislative Assembly seats. No longer could any political party afford to treat the metropolitan area with disdain.

Nonetheless, to placate members of the government who, like the Premier Bert Hawke, represented country electorates, Robertson added that:

the high School position in the country is very considerably better than in the metropolitan areaThere is no urgency at present for additional country schools ... I trust that you will make it possible to provide funds to enable an immediate start to be made with the erection of major high schools at Mt Lawley, Fremantle and Midland JunctionThe matter is most urgent.³¹⁰

Tonkin promptly informed Hawke that the introduction of shifts at Perth Boys' High School, Girdlestone High School, Kent Street High School and the Fremantle schools in 1954 would cause considerable community disquiet.

The possibility of shifts in city high schools while country students enjoyed relatively easy access to secondary education energised the Cabinet. Hawke informed the Legislative Assembly that as high school enrolments would rise into the foreseeable future increased government expenditure on secondary education in the metropolitan area was unavoidable. He hoped that the Grants Commission would make allowances for the special difficulties in Western Australia created by decades of neglect, but if this proved impossible the money would have to be cut from other areas.³¹¹ The proposed high schools at Fremantle, Mount Lawley and Midland Junction duly appeared in the 1954-55 Loans Estimates³¹² and building work began in 1954.³¹³

To keep the government attentive, Robertson then proposed that the seven existing high schools—Fremantle Boys', Princess May, Claremont, Perth Boys', Girdlestone, Perth Junior Technical and Midland Junction—be replaced by suburban high schools. He recommended that the construction of the schools proceed in stages, with four schools being commenced each financial year from 1955–56 onward. In addition, if each school was constructed in a series of classroom units, as previously suggested, students could be in occupation well before the school was completed.³¹⁴ The government had little option but to adopt Robertson's plan. By 1958 three-year high schools at Applecross, Belmont, Hollywood, Mount Lawley and Tuart Hill and five-year high schools at Fremantle and Midland Junction, had replaced the Fremantle Boys', Princess May, Claremont, Girdlestone and Midland Junction High Schools.³¹⁵

As Davy had foreseen in 1931, the financial cost of this unprecedented building program was considerable. The £3,393,496 spent on high school construction was the cost of decades of neglect of secondary education in the metropolitan area. The new schools provided short-term relief but they did not resolve the underlying crisis, which threatened to worsen as the number of secondary students continued to grow.

The new schools, most of which had enrolments in excess of 1,000 students, shocked Western Australian teachers. In its 1955 'Report on the Size and Range of Secondary Schools' the Teachers' Union Education Committee recommended an optimum enrolment of 400 in the lower school and 150 in the upper school in five-year high schools and 600 in three-year high schools. It argued that these enrolment levels would enable high school principals to know most of their students by sight.³¹⁶ The Union's 1957 Conference accepted the report as policy and directed that a copy be sent to Robertson with a request for his comments.³¹⁷ Understandably, Robertson rejected the proposal. In the circumstances it was impracticable. He informed the Union that henceforth head teachers would be administrators rather than educators. Getting to know students would be the duty of deputy headmasters, first mistresses, senior masters and senior mistresses.³¹⁸

By 1958 there were four five-year high schools and ten three-year high schools in the city and suburbs, compared with nine five-year

high schools, two three-year high schools and thirty-one junior high schools in country centres. The imbalance between country and city students had been redressed to the point where city students who passed the Junior Certificate examination now had the opportunity to complete the Leaving Certificate in a secondary school. More importantly in the pro-rural parliamentary climate, country students were well catered for.

Towards the comprehensive high school policy

Soon after becoming Director, Robertson gained Watts' permission for an internal departmental inquiry into secondary education and asked his deputy, Victor Box, to be its chair. The inquiry was charged with preparing a set of proposals for the reorganisation of secondary education. The other members of the committee were the two superintendents of secondary education, Frank Bradshaw and Andrew Boylan. Box completed the final report in May 1954.³¹⁹ The committee's recommendations were remarkably consistent with the proposals that Little and Robertson had developed during the previous decade.

The Box report

As with the earlier proposals, the committee began with the proposition that Perth Modern School was the redundant remnant of a past era with no place in a modern education system.³²⁰ This being so, it was agreed that the growing accommodation crisis in the metropolitan area provided a unique chance to reorganise secondary schooling. The existing three-year and five-year high schools would be replaced by four-year, comprehensive, coeducational and community high schools and two-year junior colleges. All new metropolitan high schools would be located in the suburbs where each would enrol students from designated local primary schools at the beginning of the calendar year of their thirteenth birthday.³²¹ The junior colleges in the committee's scheme would offer high school graduates a two-year course leading to the University of Western Australia's matriculation examination, not the smorgasbord of pre-vocational and academic courses that Little proposed for senior high schools. It appears that the committee's concept of a junior college was borrowed directly from

the Croydon Junior College experiment in England, in which the responsible local education authority brought the Sixth Form students from the various secondary schools in the district into a central school.³²² Perth Modern School with its superior facilities was to be the first college. In country centres, the committee advised that college classes would be attached to existing high schools until such time as enrolments warranted the establishment of separate junior colleges.³²³

The committee's curriculum proposals fell well short of the revolution that Little had proposed. They recommended a multilateral organisation with pre-vocational and academic streams, all of which would culminate at the conclusion of the fourth year with the award of an accredited Leaving Certificate. The committee suggested that if certification was delayed until the fourth year and the school-leaving age raised to fifteen, more students would remain at school until the end of the year in which they turned sixteen. It based this recommendation on the fact that the retention rate in Junior Certificate classes was rising, despite the school-leaving age still being set at fourteen. It concluded that when the school-leaving age rose to fifteen, students would be willing to remain at school for an additional year to obtain certification.³²⁴

The committee recommended that a Board of Secondary School Studies be established to accredit the new fourth-year testamur. The Board's membership would include representatives from commerce and industry, the private schools, the Education Department, parent organisations, trade unions and professional associations. Its mission would involve the setting of curricula, the determination of assessment procedures and the accreditation of schools. More importantly, the Board would also approve school-based curricula and assessment procedures, as each school was to have the freedom to develop its own courses.³²⁵

Three factors militated against the immediate acceptance of the Box committee's report. The first was the junior college. While the number of upper-secondary students in metropolitan government high schools was increasing and appeared likely to continue to do so, no country high school had the enrolments necessary to justify a separate junior college. Until at least one or two of the larger country towns could find the students

for a college, parliamentary approval was thus unlikely. The second was the Committee's failure to take into account the State's dire financial position. As it faced the postwar baby boom, Western Australia could not afford a sixth year of secondary education. Indeed, at the time even the existing school system was in imminent danger of collapse.

The third and most important factor was Robertson himself. In his comments on the report, he did not bother to address the issue of accreditation. He noted that the first task of any new certification authority should be to win public acceptance for the reliability of its examinations. To accomplish this, it had to work within the existing examination structure.³²⁶ Once public support had been secured, however, he maintained that the ultimately desirable assessment framework was a school certificate examination at the end of the fourth year, and a matriculation examination at the end of a proposed sixth year of secondary education. He was happy for the University to continue to conduct matriculation examinations, but a body he called the Board of Secondary Education would control the School Certificate examination.³²⁷

Robertson, nevertheless, made clear that he was committed to the comprehensive principle that the Box committee proposed, declaring that:

amongst educationist throughout the world there is a growing conviction that a High School should embrace all students in its area so that the school population should approximate as nearly as possible to the normal community. It is considered wrong socially to segregate one type of student from his total age group. Such a comprehensive school involves the provision of various courses to suit the needs and abilities of the individual students but it provides a richer social environment in which he may develop amongst all types of people.³²⁸

If the various courses were to eventuate, clearly major curriculum reform was essential. Curriculum development, at least in its early stages, had the advantage that it was relatively cheap and could be pursued as the building crisis was redressed.

The Education Department's newly organised Curriculum Research Branch began to address the matter in 1955. The Superintendent of Curriculum, Walter Neal, informed Robertson

that a survey of the literature on the introduction of comprehensive secondary schools in postwar England showed a general consensus of opinion that suggested such schools could maintain academic standards at acceptable levels. More importantly, the organisational flexibility allowed by the three-year and five-year high schools in Western Australia would permit the Education Department to meet the needs of academic and non-academic students in lower-secondary classes without compromising the needs of upper-secondary students. The main problem to be solved was the ratio of three-year to five-year high schools. Neal recommended that the ratio be adjusted from district to district according to upper-secondary retention rates and the level at which the government set the school leaving age.³²⁹

Robertson's 1956 Carnegie travelling fellowship

A visit to Canada and the United States in 1956 on a Carnegie Corporation Travelling Fellowship confirmed Robertson's belief that the Western Australian State school system was functioning well. In the report that he wrote for the government on his return he observed complacently that:

my general evaluation of Western Australia's system in comparison with the systems visited is that Western Australia is, on the whole, getting good value for the money it spends. We have, I think, good grounds for satisfactionI am satisfied that the teachers and administrative staffs of the Department are giving the next generation a better preparation for the future than is done in the USA and Canada, and as good a one as is being given in New Zealand ... despite the smaller supply (by comparison) of equipment and teaching aids and the much larger classes to be found in Western Australia.³³⁰

He also expressed his satisfaction with the achievements of Western Australian students who, he claimed, were 'at the completion of the five years of a High School course in Western Australia ... two years ahead of [their] American counterparts in most subjects.'³³¹

Robertson noticed, however, that 'even average American students' in comprehensive high schools were more self-assured, more socially aware and better able to express themselves orally

than their Australian counterparts. He recognised two factors that contributed to this. The first was a curriculum that included the study of subjects immediately relevant to the lives of individual students. The second was a higher school-leaving age. He declared that Western Australia's educational provision for children who were to leave school at fourteen years of age was 'just not good enough as a preparation for life and living nor as a preparation for membership as citizens of our Australian nation'. There were two steps that could be taken to improve the situation.

Robertson recommended to the government that it lift the school-leaving age to fifteen years immediately and then to sixteen. It was his opinion that children should not be forced to remain in school any longer than this. He believed that there was 'a type of boy and girl who feels the urge to seek employment and take on responsibility'. To force them to stay on in school might, in his view, 'be a cause of delinquency', although he did not say why. He looked favourably upon the practice in some US localities where part-time work and schooling were combined as part of apprenticeship training as an attraction for Western Australian students to stay longer in school. He realised that 'there would ... be little chance of introducing this highly desirable scheme into apprenticeship training in Western Australia because of employer and employee conservatism'. Nevertheless, he thought that it was something that could be tried with junior white-collar positions.³³²

As a second step Robertson suggested a major reform of the curriculum. He recommended establishing 'a small steering committee on Secondary curriculum' from within the Education Department to plan procedures. When the plan was finalised, a public committee would be set up to affirm the need for change. The membership of this committee might include 'suitable laymen ... as well as professional educators', but it would concern itself exclusively with general issues. Departmental educators 'working in subject subcommittees' then would determine the details of a new lower-secondary curriculum. Robertson suggested three aims for the inquiry. It would evaluate the existing curriculum and decide what should be retained, decide how government high schools could reconcile the needs of the mass of students with those of 'the intellectually gifted' preparing for matriculation 'without

sacrificing either group' and suggest 'new topics or even new subjects' for inclusion in the curriculum to bring State schools into line with changes in society. To assist with the development process Robertson asked Neal, who was studying in the United States at the time, to 'look into the workings of certain Curriculum Studies Programmes ... so that he [would] be prepared to assist [in the change] on his return.'³³³ Interestingly, Robertson never mentioned the needs of the economy, which were at the heart of Andrews' policy making.

Robertson's American experience also confirmed his 1938 belief in the 'multilateral comprehensives' as the schools best suited for Western Australian conditions. The school he now recommended would have distinct academic, technical and commercial lower-secondary courses. In rural high schools, an agricultural course would also be offered. Once the school-leaving age was raised to fifteen, the lower-secondary school program would be extended to four years and culminate with a School Certificate. The fifth year of secondary education would then be devoted exclusively to the preparation of students for matriculation. In the long term, he recommended the introduction of six years of primary education followed by six years of secondary education, in which the curriculum would be essentially multilateral. The first year of high school would be 'a transition year' which would be used 'to determine [students'] specific aptitudes ' before streaming them into appropriate courses. Certification would occur at the end of the fifth year. The upper-secondary school course would continue to be a single preparatory year for matriculation examinations controlled by the University.³³⁴

Any suggestion that the system of decentralised control that he had observed in the United States should be applied to State education in Western Australia offended Robertson's egalitarian soul. Indeed, he rejected it out of hand stating that:

small but rich districts can outbid less well-endowed districts for supervisory and teaching staff—merely by contributing by common decision more than is required by law to the School Board's funds. This is in keeping with the spirit of free enterprise in business so dear to the American heart, but it does make for inequality of educational opportunity, for an uneconomical use of public funds, for the creation

of some extraordinary anomalies and can, in extreme cases, lead to a lowering of the professional status and independence of the teachers [because] poorer districts cannot afford to hire the best teachers, so that, generally, poor districts get poor teachers and superintendents.³³⁵

Local control had no place in a democratic state. Uniformity of control over policy and the distribution of resources was preferable as it prevented the development of inequalities and inefficiencies.

An abortive attempt to lift the school-leaving age

After considering Robertson's report, the government secured an amendment of the Education Act to enable the Minister for Education to raise the school-leaving age to fifteen by whatever stages thought appropriate.³³⁶ In April 1958 Robertson asked his new minister William Hegney to raise the school-leaving age to fourteen years and six months from 1 July 1958. He informed the Minister that all students could be accommodated at the beginning of the year and there were sufficient teachers. Indeed, as most non-Junior classes lost significant numbers of students during the year, he believed that 'the department would cope with the situation quite comfortably'. Furthermore, if the 'building programme was fully implemented, there would be sufficient accommodation available within a few weeks after the opening of schools in February 1959 to cater for the 1959 enrolments'. Robertson offered three dates for the introduction of the new leaving-age: 1 July 1958, 8 September 1958 and 9 February 1959. He recommended that a decision be announced immediately and, if sufficient teachers and accommodation were available, he also suggested that the school-leaving age should be raised from fourteen years and six months to fifteen years one year later. Worried that Robertson was proceeding too quickly, the Cabinet rejected his request.³³⁷

Robertson then informed Hegney that the Education Department was ready to announce its adoption of a comprehensive high schools policy.³³⁸ In the short term, the only change of immediate significance would be the end of competitive entry to Perth Modern School. In Robertson's view, that institution 'with its—selection and segregation of talented students' was 'really an anachronism that no longer ... fits into the State-wide policy which is now to provide

the opportunity for secondary education for all children'. He recommended that 1959 should be the last year for the selective admission of first-year students to that school.³³⁹

Robertson argued that with living-away-from-home allowances, easier access to high schools in the metropolitan area and the spread of high and junior high schools in the country districts such awards would be inconsistent with a comprehensive high schools policy. The need now was for the government to direct financial assistance to upper-secondary school students through a scholarship scheme, with awards made on the basis of students' results in the Junior Certificate examination.³⁴⁰ But when Hegney presented Robertson's scholarship scheme to Cabinet in July 1958, the matter was deferred for months.³⁴¹

Following the election of the Liberal-Country Party led by David Brand early in 1959 Robertson again reviewed the school-leaving age situation. He conceded 'that unless the building programme [could] be speeded up very considerably we should not contemplate raising the school leaving-age until the accommodation problem is solved'. The new Minister for Education Arthur Watts agreed.³⁴² Clearly, Robertson had tried to push the outgoing Labor government into making premature decisions as the 1959 election approached.

The Secondary Schools' Curriculum Committee

Curriculum development proceeded parallel to Robertson's attempts to lift the school-leaving age and abolish Perth Modern School's entry examination. In December 1957, the Minister for Education established the Secondary Schools' Curriculum Committee. Robertson chaired the committee and appointed Neal as its Executive Officer. The membership of this committee was remarkable. Two of its members came from the Education Department administration, one from the Superintendents' Institute and three from the Teachers' Union. The majority of the members were drawn from business, industry, private schools, religious organisations, trade unions, the University of Western Australia, youth committees and the Parents and Citizens' Organisation.³⁴³ The committee was to produce an outline for a lower-secondary school curriculum more attuned to the needs of postwar society than the existing Junior Certificate syllabus and more attuned

to the needs of the mass of students who would remain in school when the leaving age was raised to fifteen. The committee met for the first time in February 1958 and eight months later, produced an interim report which outlined five curriculum areas: health and physical education, intellectual development and basic skills, personal and group relations, responsibility for moral choices and environmental factors and forces. Assessment for each area would be cumulative and every student finishing the course would receive a certificate. The Committee asked that its recommendations be circulated for discussion and that professional subcommittees be established to develop and refine curricula in each of the five areas.³⁴⁴

The coeducational community comprehensive high school policy announcement

Shortly after the Cabinet meeting that refused to acquiesce to Robertson over the matter of competitive entry to Perth Modern School, Hegney announced that all State high schools, including Perth Modern School, would become coeducational, community, comprehensive high schools.³⁴⁵ The official policy statement, published in December 1958, claimed that the postwar increase in secondary school enrolments had 'made it necessary from the building, teaching and curriculum viewpoint, to work to a pre-determined policy ... coeducation for all secondary pupils in comprehensive district high schools'.³⁴⁶ Selective entry schools like Perth Modern School, single-sex schools like Perth Boys' High School and specialised schools like Perth Junior Technical High School were inconsistent with such a policy and would therefore be phased out. Henceforth, students would pass through primary school and into high school with their chronological peers, without leaving their suburbs or districts. The statement defined the comprehensive high school as 'one in which a wide range of courses is offered to students in order to cater for individual differences in interest and abilities.' It declared that bringing students with diverse abilities and backgrounds together in chronologically cohesive groups in such schools would be an important step toward promoting equality of educational opportunity in Western Australia.³⁴⁷

Predictably, the Old Modernians Association objected vehemently to the change in status proposed for their *alma mater*. They maintained that it should be permitted to remain as a selective high school since its students had made a substantial contribution to the economic and cultural life of the state.³⁴⁸ This was the same dubious argument put forward in 1912 as a justification for retaining the government's subsidy to Perth High School. Perth Modern School was the only five-year State high school serving the metropolitan area between 1911 and 1952. During that time it enrolled less than two percent of the annual eligible age cohort. In these circumstances, not to have produced outstanding alumni would have been remarkable.

Robertson regarded the protest by the Old Modernians as inevitable and their arguments for the retention of the selection examination as specious. He was disappointed, however, when the Teachers' Union supported their cause. He reminded the Union that Perth Modern School had been established as a multilateral high school in 1911, but had become a selective academic school by default as successive governments stubbornly refused to establish more than one five-year high school in the metropolitan area. He also pointed out that the introduction of multilateral comprehensive high schools had been Union policy since 1941.³⁴⁹

The Union's reluctance to accept the new comprehensive high schools' policy was strengthened by staff cuts made in 1959 by the outgoing Labour government. Early in the school year, the majority of married women employed in State high schools as temporary staff members were dismissed. The cuts caused chaos as teaching programs were cancelled and the number of classes with more than fifty students trebled. With high school classrooms designed for thirty students, this was posed a major problem. Although the Education Department eventually reappointed some of the dismissed teachers, the original decision did nothing to alleviate the Union's lingering unease with the comprehensive high schools' policy.³⁵⁰

Fortunately, Watts' return as Minister for Education in the newly elected Brand government in 1959 did not mark a return to the earlier priority he had afforded to agricultural districts. In fact it was doubtful that he could have done so. Since 1953 Robertson had built the Education Department into a complex

organisation. Moreover, he had fashioned his own strong role as the Department's permanent head and implemented a needs-based approach to policy that would have made any author of a pro-rural bias obvious. For Watts to challenge Robertson could have had politically damaging consequences. As a lawyer, he was sufficiently astute to recognise the danger, which had not existed when he last was Minister.

Nevertheless, Watts was still mindful of the interests of his own constituents. He had to be convinced that country children would not be disadvantaged by the disappearance of the Scholarship and Entry examination. He eventually accepted Robertson's argument that the need was for post-Junior rather than post-primary scholarships. The scheme that Robertson proposed included fifty post-Junior scholarships of £60 *per annum* and, as a compromise, fifty means tested post-primary scholarships of £30 *per annum* to be awarded by district superintendents to students in isolated primary schools. Watts also accepted the abolition of competitive entry to Perth Modern School, which became a comprehensive high school in 1961.³⁵¹ The change in the school's status finally established a uniform system of high schools in Western Australia, as was envisaged by Robertson at the 1940 Conference.

The general education committee

Following the publication of *The Interim Report of the Secondary Education Curriculum Committee* in 1958, the Education Department convened a conference of departmental officials to discuss the way forward. Robertson informed his audience that the approach of the existing curriculum, which demanded lower-secondary school students master the factual content of the Junior Certificate syllabuses was out of step with the modern world. What was needed was a curriculum that exposed students to a breadth of subject matter and concentrated on developing conceptual understandings and learning skills. For the Education Department to reform secondary education in this way, however, it had to overcome the prestige of the traditional curriculum dominated by the Public Examinations Board. It also had to tackle the complacency of teachers, parents and employers.³⁵² Robertson then handed the meeting over to Walter Neal.

Now the Superintendent of Curriculum Research, Neal explained to the conference that a new curriculum such as the one Robertson suggested could be constructed using either the subject approach or the problem-solving approach. He proposed a combination of both methods to build a body of relevant subject matter into interesting and meaningful experiences for lower-secondary school students. He told the officials that they would be formed into a general committee and sub-committees to control the curriculum reform process. The general committee would coordinate the work of the sub-committees, which would determine specific subject-area objectives to guide the selection of content matter and the attitudes and understandings that students would be expected to develop.³⁵³

The general committee issued a progress report in October 1959. It announced that it had decided that the new curriculum would take the form of a core course that included all the general education required by any student leaving high school at the end of three years. Students would be streamed on academic ability into five groups: below average, low average, average, above average and high ability. The three-year lower secondary curriculum would be organised into three sets of annual units with the content of each unit such that the average student could complete the subject in the time allocated. For above average and high ability students, schools would have to decide whether to accelerate their progress through the curriculum or provide enrichment work.³⁵⁴

The curriculum was to be common to all students until the end of the second year. Two prevocational subject groups were to be introduced in the third year. The first included languages other than English and the specialised mathematics and science subjects needed by those students proceeding to matriculation. The committee claimed that it was unfair to expect average or even above average students to spend time studying these subjects. The second group of options included commercial subjects, domestic science, woodwork, metalwork and technical drawing. Two reasons were advanced for the late introduction of these subjects. First, the committee felt that none of them justified their time allocation in the existing curriculum 'either on the basis of utility or aesthetic cultural value'. Secondly, by offering the subjects late in the course, the committee hoped that it would encourage more students to remain in school after their fourteenth birthday.³⁵⁵

Opposition from the independent schools

When it came to their ears, features of this emerging curriculum alarmed the head teachers and administrators of Western Australia's independent and Roman Catholic schools. Three members of the 1958 interim committee, Vera Summers, G Maxwell Keys and J E Bourke noted in a memorandum addressed to Robertson that it was not until the committee's final meeting 'that it became clear that the redesigned course was to be a general secondary course to which additions were to be made in the case of the more able children'. In their opinion the change was radical and deserved a more careful examination than the interim committee had allowed. They warned that:

traditional secondary practice in Australia has been to offer a professional course as the norm, with subtractions for the less-able children. The new proposal suggested a course pitched at about the middle range of ability with additions for the more able children. ... superficially ... this [did] not represent any significant change but in fact the effect [would] prove quite revolutionary.

The result, in their opinion, would be a significant drop in educational standards, particularly as the interim report had recommended that all students, no matter what their attainment level, should receive a certificate of achievement.³⁵⁶

The three private school representatives saw no need to restrict vocational subjects, especially the professional stream subjects, to the third year of secondary schooling. Student wastage in the lower-secondary school was not a problem that they had to deal with. They needed no incentive to lure their students into the classroom for an additional year. They also explained that their enrolments were not sufficient to warrant streaming students into an intellectual hierarchy. They preferred to emphasise the social homogeneity of their students within the existing curriculum by adjusting the subject load for those of lesser ability. In their opinion, these students did not need a separate curriculum that would mark them out from their peers as inferior.³⁵⁷ Robertson thanked the independent heads for their comments, suggested a meeting and refused to discuss the matter except generally because

he had tried to 'separate himself from the details of the scheme' so that he could evaluate it in its final stage.³⁵⁸

At their meeting in May 1960, the independent schools' head teachers explained that for them the existing curriculum was not an impediment to keeping their students in school for five years of secondary education. Moreover, they did not believe that the early-leaving problem in the government sector should be handled by lowering standards in the way that the proposed curriculum reform intended. To them, a curriculum that emphasised minimum goals with additions for brighter students would do nothing to raise educational standards.³⁵⁹

Clearly, the non-government schools sector was not going to support what they perceived as the dilution of the lower-secondary school curriculum and Robertson was not going to change the course of events to please the Establishment's preferred educators. The Education Department was in a superior strategic position. Since the introduction of universal secondary education, the independent schools had lost their position as educators of the majority of upper-secondary students. The government sector was now the main player in the field and as such Robertson believed it had the right to define the lower-secondary school curriculum from which the upper-secondary curriculum would take its lead.

Departmental officials met with the Professorial Board of the University of Western Australia in July 1960 to explain the direction of the curriculum changes that they were making.³⁶⁰ By the end of the year, the curriculum committees had completed draft curricula for English, social studies, science and health education in the First Year. Robertson then announced that the new courses would be trialed in selected high schools.³⁶¹

In February 1961, the Public Examinations Board accepted the Education Department's Science A and Science B syllabuses for the Junior Certificate examination. It was the first step toward formally implementing a new lower secondary school curriculum and was followed by approval of Social Studies A and Social Studies B. The four subjects superseded physics, chemistry, biology, physiology and hygiene, history and geography in government schools.³⁶² The changes might have gone unnoticed had Neal not told the Country Women's Association conference that the Junior

Certificate examination was an 'archaic institution that had outlived its usefulness'. An accredited certificate with strictly controlled standardised forms of assessment would he said, eventually replace it.³⁶³ Head teachers from the private schools were alarmed by the prospect. If the Public Examinations Board was going to give in to the Education Department, they wanted a Leaving Certificate examination at the end of the Fourth Year and a matriculation at the end of a Sixth Year, both conducted by the Public Examinations Board. This would allow them to avoid the Education Department's proposed accredited Third Year Certificate. The PEB, however, was non-committal.³⁶⁴

Report on Secondary Education

In November 1961 Robertson asked Watts to approve a further review of secondary education in government schools. There was, Robertson claimed, 'some support for a lengthening of the course for non-academic type students from three to four years and for potential university students from five to six years'. He proposed that a committee should investigate the length of secondary education and decide what was suitable for Western Australian government schools. At the same time it could examine the role of public examinations and issues of school organisation. The curriculum was not to be an issue as 'a committee with its several sub-committees has been at work for some time now on this question.'³⁶⁵

Watts agreed to Robertson's request as long as the committee's membership was sufficient to give the Education Department a majority of the representatives.³⁶⁶ The membership of the committee, decided in March 1962, included Robertson, five departmental administrators, two representatives each from the Federation of Parents' and Citizens' Associations and the State School Teachers' Union and one each representing State secondary school principals and school teachers. There were no representatives from the independent schools.³⁶⁷

The terms of reference for the committee were deceptively simple. They were:

- to review the progress made in the implementation of the recommendations of the 1954 Committee on Secondary Education in Western Australia; and
- to consider and make recommendations on future developments.

In the course of the inquiry the committee invited submissions from 'secondary school staffs, teachers' organisations and bodies representing employers of the adolescents who have passed through the secondary schools.' No invitation to submit appears to have been made to the independent schools. They were simply boycotted.³⁶⁸

The committee's report recommended the establishment of a research project 'to assess the practical implications of a cumulative [assessment] certificate scheme'. It also suggested that the Public Examinations Board's Leaving Certificate courses include, in addition to the academic curriculum, 'other courses of a broader educational nature to meet certain pre-vocational needs of students and to cater for their wide range of abilities and interests'. To accommodate such a change it recommended separating the Leaving Certificate from the matriculation examination, a change that would have to be managed in conjunction with the University, the independent schools and the Education Department. The committee recommended the appointment of 'a Permanent Advisory Committee ... to study the needs of the community and advise the Minister on developments necessary in the secondary system to cater for these needs.' Another body, controlled by the Education Department, 'tentatively called a Council of Secondary Studies', would manage curricula, examinations, accrediting of schools and the award of scholarships.³⁶⁹

A higher school-leaving age at last

With the ability to raise the school-leaving age in stages to fifteen years fixed in legislation, Robertson began a campaign to raise the age in conjunction with the review of secondary education. The issue was complicated by the presence of a new Minister for Education, Edgar Lewis, who took over the portfolio after Watts retired in February 1962. Robertson explained to his minister that if the age was raised to fifteen from the beginning of 1964, an extra 3 800 pupils would have to be accommodated. They would require

190 additional general teachers and 125 new classrooms. The presence of these students in the schools would also aggravate the shortage of specialist teachers. Almost all the accommodation needed- two new high schools and sixty additional rooms would have to be provided to serve working-class suburbs, which had the lowest retention rates. To do this the government would have to find at least \$660,000 from general revenue and \$1,720,000 from loan funds. Having painted the horrendous cost to the State of making students stay in school until the age of fifteen, Robertson pointed out that there would be no additional cost incurred if they were required to remain in school until the end of the year in which they turned fourteen.³⁷⁰

Even this modest change, explained so clearly, was too much for Lewis. He feared a backlash from employers if they were denied a supply of cheap fourteen-year-old labour. Robertson then asked the Employers' Federation of Western Australia to confirm that keeping fourteen-year-old children in schools would not hinder the state's industrial and commercial development. The Federation confirmed Robertson's advice to Lewis and Robertson thanked the Federation for its 'assurance that industry would not be inconvenienced by the step'. He told the Federation it had been 'of considerable assistance in helping the Minister to arrive at a decision'.³⁷¹

When Lewis appeared to be having second thoughts, Robertson explained again that to keep fourteen-year-olds in school until the end of the school year represented 'a neat compromise' that would not require additional teachers or classrooms. He also pointed out that it would make the minimum period of schooling available to Western Australian children nine years, which was not an excessive period of basic training for life. Lewis was convinced at last. An act raising the school-leaving age to the end of the school year in which the child reached fourteen years of age was passed. The new age applied from the beginning of 1963.³⁷²

Robertson's campaign to lift the age to fifteen began immediately he was sure Lewis would not backtrack on the 1962 Act. When the Victorian state government announced that its school-leaving age would rise to fifteen in 1964, bringing it into line with New South Wales, Robertson informed Lewis that for the purpose of the state's case before the Commonwealth Grants Commission no penalty would

be incurred if Western Australia did likewise. He argued that if the age was lifted from the beginning of 1965, it would remove 4,350 young job-seekers from an already over-crowded job market, but to be in a position to do so, the government would have to act immediately.³⁷³

There was, however, the small matter of the estimated cost of \$1 million to be overcome. The Under Treasurer Keith Townsing opposed the idea and informed the Treasurer, David Brand, that no money was available:

And ... it [was] not possible to indicate whether [it] could in fact be achieved in view of the increasing commitments in other fields of government activity ... I have in mind particularly the heavy demand which will arise for funds in 1964/5 to finance the Muja Power Station, the very heavy hospital building programme which will carry forward in 1964/5 and the general expansion of public works.³⁷⁴

Lewis now had sufficient confidence to ignore Townsing and put the proposal to Cabinet.³⁷⁵ Townsing told Brand that the earliest moment at which a new school-leaving age could be considered was the beginning of the 1966 school year. Therefore he recommended that any legislation should be delayed at least until the next session of parliament at the beginning of 1964. Cabinet agreed and Lewis was overruled.³⁷⁶

Robertson then shifted his position. He informed Lewis that it would be a better strategy to start a classroom building program during the 1964-1965 financial year. Even so, he was anxious that the legislation should be introduced as soon as possible to allow workers on low incomes, who might be counting on a child bringing £3 or £4 each week into the home to rearrange their budgets.³⁷⁷ Lewis put Robertson's submission to Cabinet, which decided that the age should be raised to the end of the term in which the student's fifteenth birthday fell.³⁷⁸ Townsing again objected. He informed Brand that:

the Education Department [already] receives an allocation of funds to provide for a reasonable standard of accommodation for children enrolled in State schools. ... We have been assisted to get by on this limited allocation because of a higher commencing age, a lower leaving

age and perhaps bigger classes than generally is the case elsewhere in Australia.³⁷⁹

Then, in a voice eerily reminiscent of the days of Andrews and the Depression years, he demanded that the scheme be rejected as an unwarranted impost on the Treasury. His objection was ignored and the legislation passed through parliament.³⁸⁰

The new amendment to the Education Act was criticised not for raising the school-leaving age, but for not raising it far enough. The State School Teachers' Union, the Parents' and Citizens' Associations and the Western Australian Employers' Federation called for children to stay at school until the end of the year in which their fifteenth birthday fell. The Employers' Federation informed Lewis that they were influenced in their decision to call for a higher school-leaving age:

by a departmental proposal that that pre-vocational classes in various trades could be established at Technical Schools ... [in their opinion] if such training were provided in the final year it would assist in the implementation of the recommendations of the Apprenticeship Enquiry Committee regarding the reduction in the period of training.³⁸¹

Robertson, who had not mentioned to Lewis the technical schools that he hoped to fund from a Commonwealth grant to Lewis, told the Minister that 'the Department hoped to establish vocational classes in technical schools' for non-academic students. They would spend half their time in vocational activities and half on a general education program.³⁸²

Early in August 1964, Lewis brought a proposal to Cabinet that would lift the school-leaving age yet again.³⁸³ Cabinet agreed and the Education Act was amended to keep students at school until the end of the school year in which they turned fifteen.³⁸⁴ The new act made the continuing reform of the lower-secondary curriculum an urgent priority.

The Achievement Certificate

In 1964 Neal, who had moved on from the Curriculum Division to become Director of Special Services, reviewed the progress of curriculum reform since the first Robertson report in 1959.

He noted that the Public Examination Board's hold on the curriculum in the lower-secondary school had made attempts to implement the principles of the Interim Report difficult. The new science and social studies courses introduced had had to meet minimum fact-based requirements imposed by the Board, which demanded knowledge as well as understanding from students sitting for the examination. Public conservatism was a huge obstacle in the way of reform. To overcome the doubts of sceptical parents, employers and teachers, the Education Department curriculum committees had also had to move away from the areas set out in the 1959 report and realign themselves with more familiar subject lines.³⁸⁵

In his proposals for future action, Neal assumed that the employment available in the future would change dramatically and often. To prepare students for this eventuality, he advised that the three years of compulsory secondary education should provide 'a general education ... aim[ed] at the development of flexible skills, techniques and attitudes rather than just the transmission of a body of information which may itself become outdated'. Students in these years would therefore receive a broad education that would avoid the narrow focus of the traditional disciplines and keep 'pre-vocational subjects ... to a minimum'.³⁸⁶ The narrow focus of the curriculum in the junior high school pre-vocational streams would disappear.

Neal recommended that the curriculum units for the cumulative certificate trails suggested in the second Robertson report (1963) be written around the amount of work that could be accomplished by the 'average' student in one year, as was suggested following the publication of the Interim Report (1959). Students would work through the units at varying rates. They would be examined not at the end of the year but when they completed a unit. Successful students would have the unit acknowledged on their record and move onto the next appropriate unit. Unsuccessful students would repeat the unit or attempt an alternative unit more suited to their talents.³⁸⁷ Neal estimated that up to seventy percent of the school population, organised in five streams and cross-set for each core subject would follow the same curriculum but at different rates. The allocation of students to streams would be determined according to their verbal

skills, which Neal believed was the most reliable indicator of academic ability.³⁸⁸

Neal advised that the new curriculum be divided into three groups of subjects. The first would include the core subjects English, mathematics, science, social studies, health, physical education, club activities and special religious instruction. The second group would include the electives comprising manual training, domestic science, art, crafts, technical drawing, music, two languages other than English, commercial subjects and Science B. The final group would include extension units for those students who completed the core units before the end of the school year. Pre-vocational preparation for non-academic students would be limited to the third year and be done in conjunction with technical schools. It would also include supervised part-time work experience.³⁸⁹

The cumulative certificate research project began in 1964, with Neal asserting that it would eventually be introduced in every State high school irrespective of the wishes of the non-government schools or the fate of public examinations. Clearly, Robertson had overcome his earlier problem with accreditation. Initially four high schools—Applecross, Bunbury, Busselton and John Forrest—were chosen for the experiment. The students selected to participate in each school were of superior ability. Neal believed that the small start would be sufficient to indicate the mechanisms required for the implementation of the new certificate on a wider scale. However, the main reason for such a limited experiment was external to the policy-making process. The Education Department could not jeopardise its students' chances of winning the Commonwealth secondary education scholarships introduced by the Menzies government in 1965, the award of which was based on the marks gained by candidates in the Junior Certificate examination.³⁹⁰

Early in 1965, the supervisory Cumulative Certificate Committee wrestled with three problems bedevilling the experiment. It decided that a new method had to be found to identify Commonwealth scholars, other than by their results in the Junior Certificate examination. Unless this was done, it would be difficult to persuade students to participate in the project. The second issue concerned the definition of enrichment work. The committee could not decide if enrichment involved acceleration through the curriculum or study

in greater depth of each topic. The third issue involved establishing criteria for a common evaluation protocol. The committee applied two standards to this task. It decided that teachers should not be restricted in developing courses and teaching methods to meet the needs of their students. Secondly, it agreed that any award should not become an indication of a prescribed standard. It had to indicate the performance of the individual in relation to other students in the school and be a reflection of the judgement and experience of the student's teachers.³⁹¹

At its next meeting, to which independent school representatives were invited, it was decided to use an ACER test to select scholarship winners. It was also decided to define enrichment work as additional work expanding upon what was taught either by introducing unstipulated material or by teaching the stipulated material in greater depth. Consistency of evaluation between schools remained a problem. Objections were raised also about schools being permitted to develop their own courses. Members who took this position felt that a prescribed curriculum was the only way to win community support. Without the maintenance of a uniform curriculum throughout the state, the new certificate would be rejected.³⁹²

In addition, the meeting discussed the issues raised in the Petch report. After the publication of Robertson's second report in 1963, the University of Western Australia's Senate had asked Dr J A Petch of the Joint Matriculation Board of England to report on public examinations in Western Australia. In line with the wishes of the non-government schools Petch recommended that the Junior Certificate examination should be retained. On the other hand, he suggested that a distinction should be made between the Leaving Certificate examination and matriculation. In 1969, the University adopted new matriculation regulations that matched Petch's recommendations. To matriculate candidates now had to pass five subjects from specified groups and three of these subjects had to be passed at both the Leaving Certificate and Matriculation level.³⁹³

Late in 1965, Neal recommended that the name of the Cumulative Certificate be changed. He favoured calling it the Certificate of Secondary Education but Robertson believed that the title was misleading, for reasons he did not specify. He insisted that

the new certificate should be called the Achievement Certificate.³⁹⁴ By 1966, seventeen government schools, including junior high schools, were participating in the Achievement Certificate experiment. To resolve the problem of maintaining uniform standards throughout the state, the committee introduced regular moderated testing of students in each of the core subjects. Discrepancies between test results and school assessments were resolved by the intervention of moderators from the Education Department, which Robertson now insisted would become the new certifying authority.³⁹⁵

After Robertson

The departure of Neal to Canada to take up an academic appointment and Robertson into retirement in 1966 removed the main impediments to the participation of the independent and Catholic schools in the curriculum experiment.³⁹⁶ In October 1966, when the Achievement Certificate General Committee chaired by L W Loudon replaced the existing committee, one of the chairman's first acts was to approach the Director of Secondary Education, David Mossenson, to seek the participation of Roman Catholic and independent schools in the experiment. The Achievement Certificate General Committee was replaced by the Achievement Certificate Central Council, which included among its members representatives of the independent and Roman Catholic schools. Its establishment was a victory for common sense.

With the inclusion of the non-government schools, the approach to the project changed significantly. Rather than units based upon a workload suited to the average child, new curriculum units were prepared in four core subjects—English, mathematics, science and social studies—based upon the workload that an above-average or advanced student, an average or intermediate student and a below-average or basic student could complete in a school term. Each unit subject was the same at each level so that every first year high school student studied a unit of ancient history. The differences between the Basic, Intermediate and Advanced levels were in the depth of treatment of the subject. The new approach overcame the private sector's objections expressed earlier about Neal's focus upon the average student.³⁹⁷

The Central Council quickly agreed that an independent authority, not the Education Department, should control the new award. It would take responsibility for curriculum and assessment, and issue the Achievement Certificates. The new approach was trialed in 1969 with five non-government schools participating.³⁹⁸

The Dettman Committee

In June 1967, a new committee chaired by Dettman, was appointed to inquire into secondary education. The committee, with members from the government and non-government sectors, was to report on the future organisation, structure and courses required to make the introduction of the new secondary education curriculum possible.³⁹⁹ By the time it completed its work in February 1969, the implementation of the Achievement Certificate was a *fait accompli*.

The Dettman report reaffirmed the existing school-leaving age, the practice of chronological promotion and the age of transfer between primary and secondary school. It also endorsed the organisation of the Central Council's lower-secondary curriculum into Advanced, Intermediate and Basic units. The curriculum, assessment processes and the Board of Secondary Education, a semi-autonomous government organisation with its own act of Parliament would control certification procedures for the Achievement Certificate.⁴⁰⁰

Dettman made specific proposals for the implementation of the recommendations in the report. The Junior Certificate examination would cease in 1971 and the Leaving Certificate examination in 1973. The Achievement Certificate would be awarded to all students completing the three years of secondary education. The award or something similar would then be extended to include all students completing the Fifth Year.⁴⁰¹ With respect to pre-vocational education, the committee recommended that only the final year of a student's schooling should be oriented towards employment, whether it be the Third, Fourth or Fifth Year in the high school. In line with this, the report advocated the establishment of a research project to investigate the provision of pre-vocational education in the upper-secondary school.⁴⁰²

As recommended, the transition from the Public Examination Board's syllabi to the new organisation of secondary education was swift. All students who entered State secondary schools in 1970 began their secondary education as part of the Achievement Certificate program. Government school students participated in the Junior Certificate examinations for the last time in 1971. By 1972, the accredited award had replaced public examinations in lower-secondary classes. State school students now had access to ten years of common schooling, seven in the primary school and three in the secondary school.

Making sense of the Dettman reforms

The introduction of the Achievement Certificate program with its emphasis on general education, left most students without an opportunity to gain recognised pre-vocational qualifications before leaving the lower-secondary school. The specialised commercial, manual training and domestic science courses included in the Junior Certificate calendar disappeared at the end of 1971, to be replaced by Achievement Certificate options. The options did not demand the same mastery of skills and knowledge that the Junior Certificate had required. It was a loss quickly recognised by employers.

The employers' frustration increased when, at the end of 1974, the Public Examinations Board's Leaving Certificate examination was replaced by the Tertiary Admissions Examination. At the same time the Board of Secondary Education assumed responsibility for the certification of all upper-secondary school students. The new Certificate of Secondary Education assessments were based upon a single examination and a gradually increasing component of school assessment.⁴⁰³ As with the Achievement Certificate, every student was certified. In each subject, grades were awarded from A to F, mirroring the normal curve. Coming so soon after the changes in lower-secondary school assessment procedures, the new arrangements in the upper-school added to the confusion in the community. Business, in particular, demanded that the government rein in the Education Department's reforming zeal.

In December 1974, the newly elected Premier, Charles Court, approached the Minister for Education, Peter Jones. He wanted

to know if 'the State government [was] irrevocably committed to the Achievement Certificate'. It appeared that the new Premier was tired of the constant stream of complaints from employers. He also found the argument put forward in favour of the new certificate, that it protected students from the rigours of external examinations, to be vacuous. Court maintained that if students could not cope with the stresses of examinations, their ability to perform in the workforce would also be poor. As far as he was concerned accreditation should go or be reserved for weaker students. The Minister shared the Premier's reservations.⁴⁰⁴

Jones' successor in the portfolio, Graeme McKinnon, also shared the same reservations about Dettman's re-organisation of secondary education. He informed the Premier that he was 'keeping a close watch on the system of internal school assessment'. Nevertheless, he noted that all Australian states had adopted similar forms of assessment for fifteen-year-old students and that Queensland had abolished external examinations at every stage in its high schools, including for matriculation.⁴⁰⁵

When the Chamber of Commerce complained of falling standards, McKinnon replied along similar lines, but the Chamber would not be so easily reassured. It wanted a more practical curriculum in the lower-secondary school and demanded that curriculum development be taken out of the hands of the Education Department and Board of Secondary Education and given to an independent authority with a better understanding of the economy. This authority would have responsibility for ensuring that students left school with a good grasp of the basic skills and a thorough knowledge of the world in which they lived and would work. McKinnon contended that the changes in secondary education were not a retreat from the standards of excellence of the past but an opening up of 'paths to self-fulfilment and education rather than a mere training'. The Chamber let it be known that its members preferred well-trained and knowledgeable employees. Self-fulfilment was a personal matter to be pursued at one's leisure at the end of the working day.⁴⁰⁶

Confusion and anger about the Dettman reforms continued to simmer in the community. At the beginning of 1979, Court informed Peter Jones, who had returned to the education portfolio, that there must be something wrong [with the new curriculum] if it is so complex that it is taking all this time for the interpretation

of certificates to permeate through the community'. Jones claimed that 'the barriers to understanding [were] in the minds of people who [were] familiar with examination marks but unfamiliar with school assessment'.⁴⁰⁷

There was an element of truth in his assertion. The idea that all students should have their achievements certified by their teachers and that no one in the secondary school should fail was culturally foreign. Most Western Australians had reached maturity in a society where schooling was about the mastery of a range of intellectual subject matter and practical skills, which were then tested in public examinations. It was firmly believed that performance in these examinations was a measure of the student, the teacher and the school. Taking the examination away so quickly and so unexpectedly undermined public confidence in the education system.

Twelve months after the Premier's previous communication, the government appointed a panel to review educational standards in the lower-secondary schools under the chairmanship of the Professor of Education at the University of Western Australia, W.A. 'Bert' Priest. Member of the panel included representatives from business, the independent schools, the State School Teachers' Union, the Parents' and Citizens' Association and the Education Department. The Minister for Education described them as a 'group of responsible and well-informed citizens'.⁴⁰⁸

The panel concluded 'that there [could] be no firm confirmation or rebuttal of claims that standards in the basic subjects have fallen in recent years'. It decided that the problem of non-acceptance of the regimen was due to the lack of understanding of the nature of the Junior Certificate's place in the lower-secondary school curriculum in the community. Only about thirty percent of the fifteen-year-old cohort sat for the examination and of those approximately thirty percent failed. The new system awarded certificates to everyone and differentiated just as finely by awarding advanced, intermediate and basic passes. The advanced level awards equated very roughly to the old Junior Certificate cohort.⁴⁰⁹

The panel's main objection to Achievement Certificate procedures was the statistical basis upon which the awards were made. Mass comparability testing and a strict adherence to the normal curve in every school locked students into Advanced, Intermediate

or Basic categories. The panel recommended that the tests, which were conducted by the Board of Secondary education, should cease because the statistical assumptions underlying them were unsound. They wanted more responsibility for student assessment to be placed in the hands of classroom teachers and school administrators, which would 'make the effect of the school more visible in the achievement of the individual student'. They argued that if the professional performance of the school and its teachers was improving, the numbers of students achieving at high levels would increase and the number achieving at low levels would decrease.⁴¹⁰

The Priest inquiry bought the Education Department and the Board of Secondary Education time to fine-tune their assessment procedures. Removal of the manifestly silly comparability tests went some way towards reassuring the public. A decade after the implementation of cumulative assessment, there was already some acceptance of the procedure. The new generation of students was already beginning to embrace it as a normal part of school culture. The public and teachers alike, however, continued to oppose the assignment of students to Basic, Intermediate and Advanced levels in the core subjects. But more important than this was the problem of growing numbers of non-academic students in the upper-secondary school.

The unresolved problem of the early school leaver

During the 1970s capital-intensive technology in the workplace made many of Australia's unskilled workers redundant. In Western Australia, 7.3 per cent of the work force was without a job and unemployment among school-leavers between the ages of fifteen and nineteen was almost three times this level by 1979.⁴¹¹ Many of these young people, who might have sold themselves to employers as cheap unskilled labour in the past, began to return to school. Possession of an Achievement Certificate stating that they had completed the lower-secondary school course successfully at a Basic or Intermediate level gave them right of entry to upper-secondary classes. The situation was without precedent, for State high schools had never before been expected to enrol such students.

Courses leading to the Leaving Certificate examination and matriculation had been the *raison d'être* for upper-secondary

classes since Perth Modern School opened in 1912. Only students who had passed the Junior Certificate in requisite subjects had had the right to continue their education at this level. The implementation of the Achievement Certificate, however, opened the Pandora's box of further education to the seventy-five percent or so of students who had never before entered the upper-secondary school. The problem for schools was to devise courses that would appeal to these students, without interrupting the preparation of the academic stream for their final examinations.

The report of the Priest panel made it clear that the Certificate of Secondary Education awarded by the Board of Secondary Education, which replaced the Leaving Certificate awarded by the Public Examinations Board, could accommodate the average student. These students would not attempt tertiary entrance examination subjects but enrol in the wholly school assessed subjects that some schools were beginning to be offer. By 1983 the Board of Secondary Education had approved a wide range of these essentially practical courses. They included advanced industrial arts, aeronautics, animal husbandry, crops and pastures, early childhood studies, farm constructions, farm economics and management, farm practice, furniture woodwork, general business studies, general computing, home management studies, metal construction, motors and machines, seamanship, shorthand, business communications, technology and typewriting. Passes in these courses equipped students with marketable skills for employment and the knowledge upon which to build further training.⁴¹²

Because students of below-average ability had little hope of coping with wholly school assessed subjects, they were an unwelcome burden. A few schools introduced alternative courses to allow these young people to raise their Basic educational levels as a prelude to seeking further training or employment. Most schools, however, simply placed such students in regular Year 11 classes and let them fail.⁴¹³ The effect of this practice was evident in the statistics for upper-secondary enrolments. Of the Year 8 intake in 1972, 47.6 per cent returned to begin Year 11 and 30.2 per cent remained in Year 12. Of the 1980 intake, 60.3 per cent remained in Year 11 in 1983 and 34.8 per cent in Year 12 in 1984. The drop-out rate between Year 11 and 12 grew at a rate in excess of the Year 10 to Year 11 retention rate.⁴¹⁴

In 1979, Hayden Williams, the Director of the Western Australian Institute of Technology, pointed out that the Australian economy was moving into capital-intensive industries. It was unfortunate but inevitable that there would be casualties along the way, including the below-average school leavers. He suggested that what most of these students needed to learn to become employable could only be learnt in the workplace. As there were not enough unskilled and semi-skilled positions to accommodate them, the task of slotting them into the workforce was impossible. Any contribution that schools could make toward resolving the problem, therefore, would only be marginal.⁴¹⁵

Post-Dettman report reform and the below-average student

In the meantime, within a fortnight of winning the Federal election in 1972 the new Prime Minister, Gough Whitlam, announced the terms of reference and membership of the Interim Committee of the Schools' Commission. The committee, chaired by Professor Peter Karmel, was to make recommendations on the immediate financial needs of Australian government and non-government schools. The committee worked at a furious pace and presented its report to the Minister for Education, Kim Beazley, on 18 May 1973. *Schools in Australia* took as its goal 'the pursuit of equality in the sense of making, through schooling, the overall circumstances of children's education as nearly equal as possible'.⁴¹⁶

The subsequent establishment of the Australian Schools' Commission and the massive needs-based funding programs that followed certainly enhanced the quality of education delivery in all Western Australian State schools, be they rural or urban. The Western Australian government's education expenditure rose from \$83,659,000, at the beginning of the decade, to \$240,977,00 in 1975-76.⁴¹⁷ Funding following the dismissal of the Whitlam government was less generous and less oriented towards the needs of schools, public or private. Clearly, however, there were funds available to tackle the issue of non-academic students, who showed no signs of going away of their own accord.

In June 1980 the Director General of Education, David Mossenson, established a Course Coordinating Committee to examine the problem. The Committee decided that such students

had to be prepared either for employment or for further education.⁴¹⁸ It recommended the establishment of a transition education unit 'to support and extend the development of alternative upper-school courses in secondary schools' for low-ability students. The unit, which was established late in 1980, worked with schools until 1983 to develop curricula and liaison programs with local communities so that at least some of these students had positions to go to when they finally left school.⁴¹⁹

Specially formulated courses that accommodated the low levels of attainment prescribed for Basic-level students by the Achievement Certificate curriculum did nothing, however, to alleviate the deep-seated feelings of frustration, inadequacy and alienation that these young people had developed in the school environment during their years of compulsory attendance. To address this problem, the Coordinating Committee prescribed a less-restrictive learning environment 'which was not associated with a succession of failures, but [was] an atmosphere encouraging responsibility and self discipline'. Its solution was 'the provision of institutional learning environments alternative to the conventional high school or technical college'.⁴²⁰ Their vision translated into the Canning and Tuart Colleges, which were established in State high schools no longer required as conventional schools. The new colleges offered students over the age of seventeen courses that allowed them to improve their educational attainment. They found a ready clientele among well-motivated early school leavers who wanted to gain entry to technical school and university courses. Unfortunately, the new institutions did nothing to solve the problem of the non-academic student in the senior high school and left the vast majority of disgruntled young people who had already left school untouched.

The Beazley inquiry

When the Labor Party led by Brian Burke won government in February 1983, existing education reform programs were swept aside in a burst of reforming zeal. One of the Labor government's first acts was to establish the Committee of Inquiry into Education in Western Australia. The committee was large and cumbersome. Apart from its chair Kim Beazley, who had been Minister

for Education in the reformist Whitlam government, it had twenty-five members drawn from State and private schools, a wide variety of non-government organisations and government departments. The committee's terms of reference were as awkward as the size of its membership for the government wanted it to test the adequacy of almost every aspect of the Western Australian education system and report its recommendations within 12 months.⁴²¹

The Beazley committee met its brief, albeit only in general terms. It recommended that the rigid Basic, Intermediate and Advanced classification of students in the core Achievement Certificate subjects be dismantled. The committee also argued that by emphasising the 'core' subjects—English, mathematics, science and social studies—the Achievement Certificate curriculum had made optional subjects such as craft 'poor relations'. In doing so, the status of Basic-level students, who were compelled to devote most of their time to such subjects, was diminished in the community. Consequently, the committee advocated dismantling the 'core'-'option' dichotomy and replacing it with a unit approach that gave all the subjects in the curriculum equal status.⁴²²

In an attack on the traditional academic disciplines, Beazley recommended that 'serious thought be given to restructuring material which implicitly over-emphasised knowledge as an end in itself, and which did not facilitate the learning of life-skills'. It wanted core and practical subjects to be amalgamated into 'multi-disciplinary' courses. Thus, in the lower-secondary school, keyboard skills and word processing would become part of language and communication. Business mathematics would be part of mathematics. Computer science, engineering, agriculture, information processing and laboratory and workshop safety would be part of science and technology. Business studies, work experience and food and nutrition would find a place in vocational and personal awareness. Manual arts, clothing and fabrics, food and nutrition and agricultural practice would be part of practical and creative arts. Students would choose units in accord with their personal needs and desires and express their personality in the assignments they completed for evaluation. Formal testing would be kept to a minimum.⁴²³

The report of the Ministerial Working Party on School Certification and Tertiary Admissions Procedures chaired by Barry McGaw, a sub-committee of the Beazley inquiry, lent weight to these recommendations. McGaw's report recommended that upper-secondary two-year courses be divided into single-year units. Only where it was essential would units be contiguous, for example, in mathematics. High school graduation and the Certificate of Secondary Education would become the main awards for secondary students. The range of subjects available as school-assessed subjects would be expanded while for the Tertiary Admission Examination available subjects would be cut significantly. In this way McGaw emphasised the point that the main role of high schools was no longer to prepare students for matriculation but to cater for the majority average student. To emphasise the greater role to be played by teachers in assessing their upper-school students, McGaw recommended that the role of raw examination scores be discounted in favour of school assessments in calculating students' final scores for the purposes of matriculation.⁴²⁴

In the aftermath of Beazley and McGaw

Secondary education as envisaged by Beazley and McGaw was a brave new world for Western Australian teachers. According to the Education Department the system of education that would emerge from their proposals was designed to meet 'the changing needs and expectations of individuals and the community to the end of this century and probably beyond'.⁴²⁵ The interpretation was no doubt well-intentioned, but the number and the 'broad, general terms' in which the reports expressed their recommendations created difficulties. Interpretation and implementation was, for the most part, in the hands of the Education Department. In the first half of 1984, the Department established a network of committees and working parties to decide upon ways and means of realising the recommendations. This, of course, took time and set committees against working parties as they vied for resources. It also ensured that implementation would be more partial and biased than need be.

The curriculum that emerged was oriented towards the personal needs and tastes of students who were expected to choose units

related to life in their local communities. Thus, boys and girls with families that encouraged them to do so chose subjects leading to further education. Others students, with families unable to see beyond the restraints of their own community, made poor choices that isolated them in rural districts and impoverished suburbs.⁴²⁶ In this respect the Beazley-McGaw curriculum was as much a mechanism for structuring society in the 1980s as Andrews' *Report on Educational Organization* had been sixty years before.

Sixteen years after the publication of the Beazley and McGaw reports participation in the upper-secondary school had doubled. Sixty percent of boys and sixty-five percent of girls in Western Australia remained in school to complete Year 12. Approximately half of this group took practical courses, while the other half took academic courses leading to the Tertiary Entrance Examination.⁴²⁷ Remarkably, the upper-secondary school had taken on the image of the central schools prior to 1946. The wholly school assessed practical subjects approved by the Western Australian Curriculum Council were in most respects equivalent to the industrial, domestic science and commercial streams of the past. The one significant difference was that students taking wholly school assessed subjects no longer faced external examinations. The students in the Tertiary Entrance Examination stream were the equivalent in every way of the former professional stream students. Both groups studied and then sat external examinations in a limited range of academic subjects as a precursor to further education.

Three factors, however, gave the wholly school assessed subjects more prestige than had adhered to the former central school commercial, industrial and domestic courses. The first was the insistence by Beasley and McGaw that practical subjects be included in the criteria for high school graduation on an equal basis with academic subjects. The second was the Western Australian Curriculum Council's insistence that the range of awards it made to high school graduates include wholly school-assessed subjects. The third was the practice of some universities of admitting high school graduates without tertiary entrance prerequisites. Parity between practical and academic courses has seen private schools adopt the latter curriculum as their own. Indeed, the principal of St Mary's Anglican Girls' School boasted in a recent publication that '*exceptional*' was the best word to describe the achievements

of her students who took only wholly school assessed subjects and won a number of awards. These young women feature in the school journal, *Fideliter*, on an equal footing with their peers who had sat for the Tertiary Entrance Examination because the awards they received from the Curriculum Council were the same, at least in name.⁴²⁸

Despite these apparent successes, however, there are still thirty percent of State school students who continue to leave school as soon as the law will allow them to do so. Most, as the unemployment figures indicate, simply drop out. No longer useful as cheap labour, they have become the rejects of Western Australia's school system. Most, as Williams intimated thirty years earlier, can hope for nothing more than a lifetime of chronic unemployment. Whether they live in the metropolitan area or in rural districts these young people are the evidence of the failure of the Beazley-McGaw reform program.

It seems also that universal upper-secondary education has created new disparities. The old geographic inequalities between the metropolitan area and country districts have disappeared. The origin of today's differences appears to be embedded in State finance. Under-resourced State schools are losing students to Commonwealth-funded private schools able to provide academic and practical courses. Moreover, within the State system students are being encouraged to abandon the traditional academic disciplines for wholly school assessed subjects.⁴²⁹

The function of the historian, however, is not to predict where these trends will lead. It is obvious, nevertheless, that institutions bound up in the new inequalities lack the resources and will to solve the problem of the low-achieving, early school leaver. Neither the schools nor the capital-intensive economy have places for these young people. Compulsion seems an unlikely solution. No government would dare to compel business and industry to employ them, private schools cannot be forced to offer them places and State schools, with their dwindling prestige, are unlikely to find the prospect of enrolling such students enticing. It appears that if these young men and women are to find a productive niche in society, new institutions will have to be developed to accommodate them. After all, it is society that has failed them and not vice versa. The lesson of history suggests that only when

the problem of the early school leaver is sufficiently serious as to threaten the political balance of power will a solution be sought.

In conclusion

It is obvious that secondary education provision by the State in the Perth Metropolitan area was neglected for sixty years after 1890. Before government's recognised the problem, however, the shortage of high school places had to reach crisis proportions. Even then, the Minister for Education, Arthur Watts, still clung to his belief that country students deserved priority over their city cousins. But, with almost sixty-five percent of the state's population resident in the metropolitan area and voting in forty percent of the seats in the Legislative Assembly, rural interests could no longer hold sway. Successive governments acknowledged this fact and began to redress the problem.

The immediacy and size of the crisis in the 1950s, coupled with the State's limited finances, made the development of a selective secondary school system impractical. Large, utilitarian, comprehensive high schools—institutions that enrolled all the students from large, defined districts who completed primary school—were the only financially-viable solution. The long tradition of universal post-primary education in multilateral central schools, which had its foundation in 1915 when Andrews established the professional stream, made the notion of the comprehensive high schools comfortably familiar.

The crisis was the product of an agricultural ideology. When Norbert Keenan said 'the first duty of the Government is to provide ... for children in the country' he expressed the idea underpinning half a century of State education policy in Western Australia. Successive governments poured the bulk of meagre Education Department grants into rural schools. Parliament accepted the practice because the conviction that agriculture offered Western Australia economic salvation was seldom questioned. The rise of the Country Party and the electoral gerrymander that made the minor party powerful allowed the practice of such relatively generous provision outside the metropolitan area possible.

Belief that only those who lived and worked on the land were economically productive justified the policy.

Apart from its ideological roots, a cluster of administrative issues guaranteed that secondary education would be neglected in the metropolitan area. When the Public Examinations Board demanded three years' study before candidates sat for the Junior Certificate examination, Andrews used Perth Boys' School to demonstrate that secondary education could be provided cheaply and relatively efficiently in central schools. This was an administrative error by a man who wanted to develop a secondary education system in the capital city. From that moment, the central schools were allowed by the government to develop into the major providers of post-primary education in the metropolitan area.

When Peter Board, as the Royal Commissioner inquiring into the Education Department in 1921, read the Western Australian Education system as an under-developed microcosm of his own state, the possibility of more than a single metropolitan State high school was forfeited. His recommendations assumed that Western Australia would develop a selective post-primary education system allocating primary school students to secondary schools or specialist technical, domestic science and commercial schools after a rigorous selection process. He failed, however, to make it clear that to make such a system possible Western Australia would need additional high schools in its capital city. His omission left successive governments free to neglect secondary education in the city.

With nothing but the central schools to maintain the availability of secondary education in the city, Andrews integrated the post-primary curriculum with the Public Examinations Board's Junior Certificate syllabus. It was an act worthy of Cyril Jackson's turn-of-the-century innovation that had allowed elementary school students to aspire to a University of Adelaide degree. Andrews successors then used the central schools and Perth Technical school to ensure that central school students had access to the secondary education curriculum, albeit in a truncated form and in inferior institutions. Perth Modern School remained as an elitist and anomalous institution that was isolated from the five country State high schools by distance and an exclusive entry policy.

Three Directors of Education played important roles in the development of comprehensive secondary education

in Western Australia. James Klein, in his 1935 reorganisation of the central school curriculum, recognised the role the central schools played in providing secondary education. Murray Little, in the pursuit of curriculum reform, recognised that the neglect of secondary education in the city could not continue. Thomas Robertson, who was happy to delegate curriculum reform to others, identified the multilateral or comprehensive high school as the vehicle with which to develop a State secondary education system. The comprehensive high school amalgamated Robertson's organisational and Little's curriculum visions when, in 1972, the Education Department introduced the Achievement Certificate. The last vestiges of the blatant disparity in provision between metropolitan and rural districts also disappeared.

An important part of any broad historical survey is to raise issues for further research. Despite the thirty years that have elapsed since the Beazley and McGaw reports were published, the new inequalities that have emerged are not yet the province of the educational historian. The consequences of the unit curriculum, school-based assessment, new tertiary entrance requirements are still working themselves out in the secondary schools. Furthermore, the social and economic costs of the shift to capital-intensive technology in the work place continue to resound in the community. Because of their immediacy to the present, these developments are still best left to the sociologist and the political scientist.

Older issues, however, undoubtedly fall into the realm of history. Beginning in 1915, the central schools developed as multilateral institutions so that when the comprehensive high school was introduced the concept of parallel streams in each school was familiar. They also provided more lower-secondary education than the State high schools, despite the fact that they were primary schools. No one has yet examined these modest and paradoxical institutions in any detail.

A second issue is the intriguing role of Murray Little, who took his radical imagination into the Directorate. He has avoided the biographer's scrutiny, perhaps because he was schooled and trained in the State system. His departmental files indicate considerable scope for a detailed investigation. He was a scholar with interests in film and youth work, who seldom took departmental regulations seriously when they interfered with the way he thought

his classes and schools should be administered. Moreover, when he retired it would seem that he spent some time with UNESCO in south-east Asia.

A third issue is the University of Western Australia's Public Examination's Board. The late Michael White did some preliminary work on the subject, but there is no definitive history of the institution. To begin to comprehend the history of secondary education in Western Australia in the twentieth century it is necessary to understand how public examinations functioned in the State system and private schools. It seems, from a preliminary survey, that they fuelled the curriculum that made secondary education a possibility.

One large gap in the history of education in Western Australia concerns the relationship between Church and State. This relationship did not end in 1895 when State aid was withdrawn nor when Perth High School lost its State subsidy. As late as the 1960s, when the Achievement Certificate program was being developed, evidence of a contentious relationship reappeared. It would be naïve to imagine that it was dormant during the intervening years. Another gap in the literature is the story of the early school leaver. These students become visible to society only in times of youth unemployment. The history of these young people, in school and without and in good times and bad, is another facet of State education open to inquiry. By far the largest gap, however, in the history of education in Western Australia is the need for a new text. Mossenson's linear Whiggish work writes the conflict and confusion, the petty bickering and political bastardry that are integral to State education policy and practice out of the script. The naiveté of this interpretation means that it can no longer be accepted as the definitive text it once was. Even so, it is a thoroughly researched work and the ideal foundation for a new beginning. Without a new and challenging text, the teaching of the history of education in Western Australia will continue to languish.

NOTES

1. Minister for Education Norbert Keenan, quoted in School Leaving Age, *The West Australian* (WA), 10/12/1930.
2. David Black, *Liberals Triumphant--The Politics of Development 1947-1980*, in C.T. Stannage (ed.), *A New History of Western Australia*, Perth, UWA Press, 1981, p.458.
3. Jeremy Buxton, Electoral Politics Past and Present in Western Australia, in Ralph Pervan and Campbell Sharman (eds) *Essays on Western Australian Politics*, Perth, UWA Press, 1979, p.46.
4. Lenore Layman, The Country Party: rise and decline, in Pervan and Sharman, p.161.
5. Governor's Speech to Legislative Council, WA, 3/12/1875.
6. D. Mossenson, *State Education in Western Australia 1929-1960*, Perth, UWAP, 1972, pp.36-46. The 1871 Act replaced the General Board of Education with the Central Board of Education, a five-person body appointed by and responsible to the Colonial Governor, which administered elementary education until 1893.
7. Governor's Speech, 3/12/1875.
8. Governor to Secretary of State for the Colonies (Lord Carnarvon), 25/1/1876, *Western Australian Votes and Proceedings (WAVP) 1875-76*, p.9. O'Grady-Lefroy was Colonial Treasurer, Hocking was Attorney General and Fraser was Acting Colonial Secretary and Surveyor General.
9. Mossenson, pp.61-63.
10. WAVP 1875-76, p.96.
11. WA, 24/12/1875.
12. *The Herald*, 11/12/1875 and WA, 14/12/1875 and 24/12/1875.
13. Memorial to the Legislative Council from Martin Griver and Memorial to the Secretary of State for the Colonies from Martin Griver, Bishop of Perth, 17/1/1876, WAVP 1875-76, pp.10-11.
14. Secretary of State to Governor, 2/4/1876, WAVP 1875-6, p.51.
15. ER Wyeth, *Education in Queensland and the Moreton Bay District of New South Wales*, Melbourne, ACER, 1955, p.84.
16. WAPD 1876, p.130.
17. *An Act to make provision for the Higher Education of Boys*, Vic 40, No. 8, 1876, Preamble, c 2 and c 3.
18. WAPD 1876, pp.127-129.
19. Mossenson, p.86.
20. The Christian Brothers opened their first secondary school in the metropolitan area in 1894. The Presbyterian Church opened Alexander Scotch College in 1897. Guildford Grammar School opened as a private venture school in the 1890s, but was purchased in 1910 by the Church of England. DP Leinster-MacKay, On the Un-English Character of Western Australian Independent School 1846-1976, *Early Days, The Journal*

- of the Royal Western Australian Historical Society, Vol. 7, No. 8, 1976, pp.43-54.
21. G Blainey, *The Rush that Never Ended, A History of Australian Mining*. Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 1969, pp.162-175, FK Crowley, *Australia's Western Third: a history of Western Australia*. London, Macmillan, 1960, pp.100-130 and R Lourens, 1892-1901, in P Firkins (ed.) *A History of Commerce and Industry in Western Australia*. Nedlands, UWAP, 1979, pp.35-38.
 22. M White, *The Community and Post-School Education in Western Australia*. Perth, Trust Publications, 1981, pp.95-107.
 23. Education Department, *Regulations 1895*, Schedule IV. By 1908 Schedule 4 had served its purpose and was withdrawn.
 24. Education Department, *Annual Report for the Year (AR) 1893*. pp.21-25, AR 1894, p.32 and p.49 and AR 1896, p.33.
 25. Jackson appears to have accepted the appointment after six months of ill health, which forced him to resign as one of the two members for Tower Hamlets on the London School Board. *The Schoolmaster*, 17/10/1896, p.621.
 26. AR 1900, p.34.
 27. Thomas Huxley, *Science and Education*. New York, Citadel Press, 1964, p.358.
 28. AR 1898, p.46
 29. JK Ewers, *Perth Boys' School*. Perth, Government Printer, 1947, pp.120-122.
 30. Mossenson, p.101. The University of Adelaide began conducting public examinations in Perth in 1896 at Frederick Faulkner's behest. Students generally sat for the Primary Certificate examination at about 13 years of age. The Junior Certificate examination required at least two years' further study, while the Senior Certificate and Higher Certificate examinations each required a minimum of one years' additional preparation.
 31. *An Act to amend the Law relating to Public Elementary Education*, Vic 63, No. 3, 1899.
 32. AR 1902, p.2.
 33. Mossenson, p.101.
 34. *Ibid.*, pp.3-4.
 35. WAPD 1906, p.1342 and pp.1349-1357.
 36. Education Department File (EDF) 604-06, Inspector General to Minister, 26/2/1906. The proposed fee would make the State school attractive to the state's growing middle class. Scotch College charged £9/9/0 per annum, CBC £12, Methodist Ladies College £9/9/0 and Perth High School £12.
 37. JS Battye, *The Cyclopaedia of Western Australia*, Vol. 1. Adelaide, The Cyclopaedia Company, 1912, p.270.
 38. AR 1906, p.26, AR 1907, p.28 and AR 1913, p.25. Students between the ages of 14 and 15 were charged one shilling a week and students between 15 and 16, two shillings.
 39. EDF 753-11, Premier to Cabinet, 12/1/1904.
 40. JP Walton, Notes on Education in Other Countries, AR 1906, p.84.

41. Chief Inspector's Report, AR 1906, p.35.
42. Chief Inspector's Report, AR 1907, p.40.
43. See EDF 5304-08.
44. *Ibid.*, The first page of Walton's notes is dated 20 October 1907.
45. *Ibid.*, Inspector General to Minister, 29/11/1907.
46. EDF 604-06. Cabinet had approved £2 000 for preliminary work on a State high school on 18/2/1908.
47. Letter from the Chief Inspector, WA, 13/2/1909. Children in Western Australia were compelled to attend school from the day of their sixth birthday until the day of their fourteenth birthday.
48. AR 1910, p.9.
49. EDF 379-03 Premier to Minister, 13/1/1903.
50. *Ibid.*, Minister to Inspector General, 20/4/1903.
51. *Ibid.*, Inspector General to Minister, 4/5/1903.
52. *Ibid.*, Minister to Inspector General, 6/5/1903.
53. EDF 753-11, Premier to Inspector General, 21/8/1903.
54. *Ibid.*, Inspector General to Premier, 24/8/1903.
55. *Ibid.*, Premier to Inspector General 24/8/1903 and Inspector General to Premier, 7/9/1903.
56. *Ibid.*, Inspector General to Premier, 9/9/1903.
57. *Ibid.*, Bishop.Riley to Premier, 18/8/1903.
58. *Ibid.*, Premier to chairman of the Board of Governors, Perth High School, 19/9/1903.
59. *Ibid.*, Deputation to Premier, 4/11/1903.
60. WAPD 1903-04, p.3044.
61. W Birman, Political and Administrative Problems encountered by Cecil Andrews in his bid to establish a State Secondary School in Western Australia, Unpublished Paper presented ANZHES Conference, Hobart, 1982, p.5.
62. B De Garis, Self-Government and the Evolution of Party Politics 1871-1911, in CT Stannage (ed.) *A New History of Western Australia*. Perth, UWAP, 1981,p.349
63. AR 1903, p.4, AR 1905, p.73 and AR 1906, p.67.
64. AR 1906, p.9.
65. *Ibid.*, p.10.
66. EDF 604-06, Inspector General to Minister, 25/3/1907, Copy of Cabinet memo, 24/6/1907, and a note dated 18/2/1908 in Andrews' hand.
67. Secondary Education, WA, 3/4/1908.
68. Secondary Education, WA, 3/4/1908.
69. See Royal Commission on the Establishment of a University in Western Australia, Report, VPWA 1910 and *The University of Western Australia Act*, No. 11 of 1911.
70. EDF 604-06, Inspector General to Minister, 8/4/1908. State aid was abolished in 1895.
71. Editorial, *The Cygnet*, 11:8, 1907, p.1.

72. EDF 379-03, Inspector General to Minister, 30/8/1907.
73. *Ibid.*, Chief Inspector to Minister, 10/8/1907, Minister to Chief Inspector, 17/8/1907 and Minister to Chief Inspector, 7/9/1907.
74. Chief Secretary's Office File 225-09, High School Report of Governors, Year ended 30/6/1908.
75. CRP Andrews, Note on Secondary Education, in AR 1907, pp.13-14.
76. WA, 28/7/1908.
77. Letters from Faulkner of Perth High School, Lynch of Christian Brothers' School, and Anderson of Scotch College were published in *The West Australian* on the 30/7/1908 and 31/8/1908.
78. High School Speech Day, WA, 27/8/1908.
79. Presbyterian Assembly Meeting, WA, 23/11/1908.
80. WAPD 1908-1909, pp.667-8 and pp.1411-1433.
81. Inspector General Replies, WA, 26/11/1908.
82. See EDF 604-06 and EDF 2388-11 for details.
83. EDF 2388-11, Inspector General to Minister, 9/11/1909.
84. AR 1910, p.6 and AR 1911, p.10.
85. AR 1912, p.11.
86. EC, Vol. 14, No. 3, 1912, p.94.
87. EC, Vol. 15, No. 10, 1913, p.146.
88. EC, Vol. 19, No. 8, p.223.
89. J Gregory, Education and upward mobility in interwar Western Australia between the wars, 1919-1939, Perth, in J. Gregory (ed.) *Studies in Western Australian History IX: Western Australia between the wars, 1919-1939*, Nedlands, June 1990, pp.83-95.
90. AR 1911, p.10 and p.99-100.
91. *Ibid.*, p.5 and p.98.
92. EDF 2293-11, Brown to Henn 23/3/1911, Henn to Brown 6/4/1911, Faulkner to Brown 13/4/1911, Noted 7/7/1911, and Brown to City of Perth Town Clerk 15/5/1911.
93. *Ibid.*, Brown to Inspector General 3/11/1911, Minister to Chief Inspector 29/3/1912, Inspector General to Faulkner 16/4/1912, Faulkner to Inspector General 25/4/1912, Inspector General to Minister 30/4/1912, and Premier to Minister, 14/5/1912.
94. The private secondary schools applied for compensation in 1917. See EDF 6-17, Secondary education - pecuniary compensation for existing secondary schools.
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96. Snobbery in Schools, WA, 25/4/1911.
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98. Report of the Select Committee of the Legislative Council on the High School Amendment Bill, WAVP 1912, A8, p.3.
99. *The Cygnet*, 5:6, 1912, pp.1-2, and Speech Day, *The Cygnet*, 6:9, 1913, p.5 and Mossenson, p.121.

100. EDF 2293-11, Secondary Schools' Athletics Association to Parsons, 26/2/1918 and Director to Minister, 12/3/1918. The Permanent head of the Education Department became Director of Education in 1913. See EDF 2930-12, Inspector General of Schools—alteration of title to Director of Education and Under Secretary as per re Classification of Proposals.
101. CRP Andrews, *Report on Education Organization*, Perth, Government Printer, 1912.
102. *Ibid.*, p.9.
103. *Ibid.*, p.19.
104. *Ibid.*, p.14.
105. *Ibid.*, p.21.
106. *Ibid.*
107. *Ibid.*, pp.19-22. See also AR 1911, p.10, AR 1912, p.11 and Education Department of Western Australia, *The Curricula for Primary and Central Schools*, Perth, Government Printer, 1914, p.44 ff.
108. CRP Andrews, *Report upon Continuation schools and the Question of Compulsory Attendance*, Perth, Government Printer, 1912, pp.1-2.
109. EDF 6057-13, Inspector General to Minister, 22/12/1911.
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112. Layman, in Pervan and Sharman (eds), p.161.
113. EDF 5170-10, Andrews' notes on discussion with Mc Clintock, Hon Sec Kalgoorlie School Management Committee, 10/12/1910.
114. *Ibid.*, Kalgoorlie School Committee to Minister, 10/5/1911 and Inspector General to Kalgoorlie School Committee, 18/5/1911.
115. *Ibid.*, Kalgoorlie School Committee to Inspector General, 29/7/1912.
116. *Ibid.*, Inspector General to Kalgoorlie School Committee, 12/12/1912.
117. *Ibid.*, Director to Minister, 12/2/1913.
118. EC, Vol. 14, No. 4, p.125 and EDF 5170, Contract signed 31/12/1913, school opened 28/4/1914.
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121. Western Australia, *Regulations of the Education Department*. Perth, Government Printer, 1922, No. 9, p.56.
122. *Ibid.*, No. 184, p.112.
123. EDF 1693-17, Instruction on district high schools for *Education Circular*, 24/8/1917.
124. AR 1917, p.16, AR 1918, p.15, AR 1924, p.5.
125. EDF 2669-21, Director to Minister, 22/2/1920, EDF 1410-18, Director to Minister, 28/9/1920 and EDF 2857-16, Head Teacher, Geraldton to Director, 2/2/1928.
126. AR 1922, p.6, AR 1923, p.5, AR 1925, p.5, AR 1939, p.5 and AR 1952, p.6.

127. M. White, Public Examinations in Western Australia: Reflections on their Establishment, *Australian and New Zealand History of Education Journal*, Vol. 3, No. 1, 1974, pp.41-51.
128. AR 1912, p.11 and AR 1915, p.10.
129. AR 1916, p.17
130. See CRP Andrews, *Report on Industrial Education*, Perth, Government Printer, 1917.
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132. AR 1922, p.4.
133. Estimations arrived at by dividing annual Professional stream enrolments by three for each year of the course and then dividing this figure by 90.
134. Northam High School Opening, *The Northam Advertiser*, 29/10/1921.
135. AR 1921, p.9.
136. WAPD 1928, p.1658-1659
137. WAPD 1915, p.1637.
138. Education Department Waste, WA, 5/2/1915.
139. Black, in Stannage, p.387.
140. AR 1917, pp.13-14, AR 1918, pp.11-12 and AR 1919, pp.10-13.
141. EDF 2605-29, Director to Minister, 26/10/1920.
142. Mossenson, p.131.
143. GD Snooks, Development in adversity 1913-1946, in Stannage, *New History*, pp.238-239.
144. WAPD 1920, p.1549.
145. Royal Commission to Inquire into and Report Upon the System of Public Elementary Education Followed in the State of Western Australia and the Administration of the Acts Relating Thereto, Report, WAVP 1921, Parliamentary Paper (PP) No. 4, p.3. (Board Report).
146. *Ibid.*, p.3.
147. Board Report, p.1.
148. Education Commission, WA, 31/5/1921.
149. Mossenson, pp.131-132.
150. AR 1924, p.6.
151. EDF 1444-27, Director to Parsons, 11/12/1927.
152. *Ibid.*, Parsons to Director, 20/2/1931 and Director to Parsons, 3/3/1931.
153. *Ibid.*, 26/11/1931. The day-matriculation classes began at the beginning of 1931.
154. Public Examinations Board (PEB), Minutes of meeting held 1/8/1924.
155. *Ibid.*, Minutes of meeting held 30/7/1926.
156. *Ibid.*, Minutes of meeting held 23/9/1927.
157. *Ibid.*, Minutes of meeting held 23/9/1927. The groups were withdrawn in 1936, and replaced by a requirement that students pass five subjects, including English, for certification.
158. Black, The Era of Labor Ascendancy 1924-1947, in Stannage, p.414.
159. EDF 2305-30, Adviser to Minister, 30/10/1930.
160. *Ibid.*, Director to Minister, 2/11/1930.

161. White, *Post-school education*, pp.194-195.
162. Women's Service Guild Conference, WA, 3/12/1930.
163. EDF 2605-29, Director to Minister, 3/12/1930. Keenan' note.
164. School Leaving Age, WA, 10/12/1930.
165. EDF 2605-29, Minister to Cabinet, 12/12/1930.
166. Continuation Classes, WA, 13/2/1931.
167. Minister to RG Nicholson (General Secretary, Western Australian Board of the Australian Natives' Association), in *WATJ*, Vol. 21, No. 1, 1931, pp.12-13.
168. The Government and Education, *WATJ*, Vol. 21, No. 2, 1931, p.2.
169. See EDF 1088-33, Superintendent of Technical Education, Annual Report 1933.
170. *WAPD 1931*, pp.2360-2461.
171. Chamber of Commerce, WA, 15/7/1931, PC Anderson, WA, 22/7/1931 and PR LeCouteur, WA, 14/8/1931.
172. *WAPD 1931*, p.3694.
173. WA, 4/7/1931.
174. Black, Labor Ascendancy, in Stannage, p.419.
175. Mossenson, p.140.
176. *WAPD 1931*, pp.4772-4773.
177. The Hadow report on the Adolescent: Report of the Education Committee on its application to this State, *WATJ*, Vol. 22, No. 6, 1932, pp.91-93.
178. Teachers' Conference, WA, 17/8/1932.
179. EDF 975-31, Director to Minister, 19/8/1932.
180. State School Teachers' Union of Western Australia Departmental Correspondence File (SSTUWA DCF) 1936, General Secretary to Director 14/10/1936 and Director to General Secretary 9/12/1936.
181. *AR 1935*, pp.7-8.
182. New Girls' School, *Education Circular (EC)* Vol. 38, No. 6, 1936, p.84.
183. J. Klein, Address by the Director of Education, *Ibid.*, pp.86-87.
184. SSTUWA DCF 1937, Minister to General Secretary, 10/5/1937, and Minister to General Secretary, 23/6/1937.
185. *WATJ*, Vol. 27, No. 4, 1937, p.37.
186. F Tate, Introduction, in KS Cunningham and WC Radford (eds), *Education for Complete Living: the Challenge for Today, The Proceedings of the New Education Fellowship Conference Held in Australia, 1 August to September 20 1937*, Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1938, p.xiii ff.
187. Hart, Criticisms of Education in Australia, in Cunningham and Radford, pp.654-660.
188. Thirty Second Annual Report of the Public Service Commissioner for the Twelve Months Ended 1 July 1937, *WAVP 1937*, PP 12, p.7.
189. Deputation to the Minister, *WATJ*, Vol. 27, No. 6, 1937, pp.141-48.
190. *WAPD 1937*, p.1617.
191. Visiting Professor's Views, WA, 16/11/1937,
192. Visiting Professor's Lecture, WA, 22/11/1937.
193. WA, 12/1/1938.

194. AR 1938, p.12.
195. Perth Girl' Central School opened in the accommodation vacated at James Street when the Perth Girls' School moved to its new location in East Perth. AR 1936, p.13. SSTUWA DCF 1937-1938, General Secretary to Director, 2/2/1938.
196. The Kent Street Central School eventually opened in 1940 with classes in eight rooms on the site and others in the nearby Victoria Park State School. It was grossly overcrowded from the moment of its opening. AR 1940, p.7. SSTUWA DCF 1937-38, Acting Director to General Secretary SSTUWA 22/2/1938.
197. EDF 1776-35, Hon Sec. Inglewood Parent' and Citizens' Association to Director, 16/2/1934.
198. See also SSTUWA Education Committee Minutes, Meeting held 17/6/1935.
199. Education Committee Minutes, Meetings held 20/1/1936 and 6/2/1936.
200. EDF 1021-36, Notice for publication in *Government Gazette*, 22/5/1936. See also Amendment to Regulations, EC, Vol. 38, No. 6, 1936 pp.179-181.
201. Royal Commission on Youth Employment and the Apprenticeship System, Report (Royal Commissioner AA Wolff), WAVP 1938, No. 2A, pp.23-33.
202. AR 1939, p.5 and AR 1940, p.7 and p.16.
203. See EDF 85-1902, EDF 319-14, EDF 1507-1917 and EDF 2368-1928.
204. Contributed, Post-Primary Education, EC, Vol. 37 No. 6, 1935, pp.205-207. (Little's address was also reported in *The West Australian*, which gave him full acknowledgment.)
205. *Ibid.*
206. *Ibid.*
207. *Ibid.*
208. EDF 2182-35, Little to Director, 14/12/1935.
209. EDF 319-14, Director of Education to Public Service Commissioner, 31/1/1931. Little's appointment became permanent in January 1932. EDF 2368-28, Public Service Commissioner to Director, 11/9/1933. EDF 2368, Public Service Commissioner to Chief Inspector of Schools, 2/10/1940. Appointment dated 18/11/1940.
210. SSTUWA, Transcript of Debate, Annual Conference 1940, unpaginated.
211. *Ibid.*
212. SSTUWA, Education Committee Minutes, Meeting held 3/10/1940.
213. SSTUWA Education Committee Minutes, Meeting held 7/11/1940.
214. *Ibid.*, Interim Report of Subcommittee dealing with Secondary Education.
215. *Ibid.*
216. *Ibid.*
217. *Ibid.*, Meeting held 5/6/1941.
218. EDF 789-38, Public Service Commissioner to Director, 24/12/1940.
219. Public Examinations, WA, 5/12/1936. Also, TL Robertson, Our Public Examinations, *The Western Australian Teachers' Journal (WATJ)*, Vol. 26, No. 8, 1936, pp.213-215 and Our Public Examinations: A suggestion for reform, *WATJ*, Vol. 28, No. 1, 1938, pp.14-16.

220. EDF 2857-16, Head Teacher, Geraldton, to Director of Education, 7/6/1938.
221. Thomas L Robertson, The special place examination: an investigation into the London Junior County Scholarship Examination, Ph D Thesis, University of London.
222. TL Robertson, Report of TL Robertson on the Year spent as an Australian Carnegie Fellow 1938-1939, p.11, p.25 and p.27.
223. *Ibid.*, pp.28-29.
224. *Ibid.*, p.49.
225. *Ibid.*, p.46.
226. *Ibid.*, p.51.
227. Michael White, *Thomas Logan Robertson A Biography*, Perth, Curtin University of Technology, 1999, pp.11-13.
228. AR 1940, p.5.
229. EDF 2605-29, Director to Minister, 10/1/1941.
230. WAPD 1943, p.544.
231. Delegation, WATJ, Vol. 33, No. 11, 1944, pp.174-175.
232. EDF 90-44, Meeting held 27/1/1944.
233. EDF 269-43, Director to Chairman, Building Reference Committee, 17/5/1944.
234. EDF 776-44, Minister to Secretary, Metropolitan Council, ALP 28/11/1944.
235. EDF 789-38, Director to Deputy Director General of Manpower, 13/12/1944.
236. *Ibid.*, Director to Premier, 18/12/1944.
237. *Ibid.*, Public Service Commissioner to Director, 8/1/1945, and Robertson to Director, 20/4/1945.
238. *Ibid.*, Robertson to Director, 11/9/1945.
239. *Ibid.*, Robertson to Director, 11/9/1945.
240. EDF 962-37, TL Robertson, A General Outline of Proposals for the Amalgamation of Post Primary and Secondary Education, p.1.
241. *Ibid.*, p.3.
242. *Ibid.*
243. *Ibid.*
244. *Ibid.*, p.10.
245. *Ibid.*, p.2.
246. *Ibid.*, p.6.
247. *Ibid.* pp.7-8.
248. *Ibid.*, p.4.
249. *Ibid.*, pp.13-14.
250. EDF 584-34 Director to Minister, 20/6/1945 and EDF 962-37, Director to Minister 16/4/1946.
251. See EDF 269-43. This is one of two postwar reconstruction file which contains numerous letters from rural and urban organisations to the Minister for Education and the Director of Education recommending improvements to the State education system.
252. SSTUWA Transcript of Annual Conference of Teachers 1941 pp.40-42. Little gave the Group permission to conduct research in the central schools.

The pamphlet was based on information gathered in the course of this research. See EDF 642-41, Director to King, 7/8/1941. King was a lecturer at the University of Western Australia.

253. EDF 642-41, Dept of Labour and National Service to Premier, 26/11/1941 and Premier to Director, 9/12/1941.
254. *Ibid.*, Director to Premier, 9/12/1941.
255. SSTUWA Teachers Conference Minutes 1942, p.8.
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265. EDF 98-45, Commonwealth Grants Commission Director's Submission, undated. See also LF Crisp, *Australian National Government*, 5th Ed. Melbourne, Longman Cheshire, 1983, p.114. For a detailed analysis of the role of the Commonwealth Grants Commission, see PJ Jones, *The Influence of the Commonwealth Grants Commission on Education Policy in the Claimant States: A Study of Commonwealth-State Relations*, Ph D Thesis, UWA, 1978, p.199.
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267. EC, Vol. 48, No. 4, 1946, p.137 and EC, Vol. 49, No. 1, 1947, p.48.
268. AR 1945, pp.5-6 and AR 1946, p.6 and 27. Kalgoorlie Central School dropped its post-primary classes at the end 1947 and in 1952 the Boulder Central School was reclassified as a three-year high school. AR 1948, p.6 and EC, Vol. 54, No. 3, 1952, p.3.
269. Amendments to Regulations, EC, Vol. 49, No. 6, 1947, pp.60-61.
270. *Ibid.*
271. AR 1946 p.27 and AR 1950 p.22.
272. AR 1946, p.6, p.13, p.20 and AR 1950 p.18, p.20, p.22.
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279. SSTUWA, Minutes of deputation to Director, 9/6/1949.
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281. *Ibid.*, Western Australian Government Railways to Director, 28/1/1949, Department of Public Works to Director, 14/11/1949, WA Employers' Federation to Director, 10/11/1949, Perth Chamber of Commerce to Director, 25/11/1949 and WA Chamber of Commerce to Director, 1/12/1949.
282. See Committee on Secondary Education (HW Dettman) *Secondary Education in Western Australia* Perth, Education Department of Western Australia, 1969, p.45.
283. EDF 261-49, Director to WC Radford, ACER Executive Officer, 29/9/1958.
284. AR 1970, p.3.
285. AR 1951, p.7.
286. AR 1953, p.38.
287. *EC*, Vol. 55, No. 8, p.159.
288. *Ibid.*, pp.161.
289. EDF 2478-28, Superintendent of Secondary Education to Director, 7/7/1949. Little's note 'I agree' 19/7/1949.
290. See EDF 1984-53, Teacher Training Secondary Training Course.
291. AR 1951, p.5.
292. *EC*, Vol. 54, No. 2, 1952, p.2.
293. AR 1952, p.14, AR 1955, p.21 and AR 1956, p.20.
294. AR 1952, p.14. The old diploma ceased in 1950, two years after the introduction of the B.Ed.
295. AR 1955, p.22.
296. AR 1956, p.7.
297. *Ibid.*, p.29.
298. EDF 776-44, Box to Director, 20/3/1951.
299. *Ibid.*
300. EDF 1145-52 Minister to Premier, 18/6/1952.
301. WA, 5/8/1952.
302. EDF 776-44, Statement by Minister for Education A Watts. Handed to the metropolitan newspapers, 5/6/1952.
303. D Black, in Stannage (ed), p.445.
304. EDF 1314-53, Minister to Director, 24/2/1953.
305. *Ibid.*, Box to Director, 27/2/1953.
306. *Ibid.*, Principal Architect to Under Secretary, PWD, 21/3/1953.
307. Jones, p.149 and 153.
308. EDF 1699-53, Director to Minister, 30/9/1953.

309. *Ibid.*
310. *Ibid.*
311. WAPD 1953, p.1238.
312. PWDF 1699-53, Minister for Works to Treasurer, 26/11/1953.
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314. PWDF 1699-53, Minister for Works to Treasurer, 26/11/1953.
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316. SSTUWA Education Committee, Minutes of meeting held 28/10/1955.
317. SSTUWA DCF 1957, General Secretary to Director, 9/8/1957.
318. *Ibid.*, Director to Assistant General Secretary, 3/9/1957.
319. EDF 1342-52, V Box, Secondary Education, 13/5/1954. Director's initials, 19/8/1954.
320. *Ibid.*, Box report, pp.3-5.
321. *Ibid.*, pp.1-3.
322. *Ibid.* Divisional Superintendent of Secondary Education to Superintendents A Boylen and F Bradshaw, 15/2/1954.
323. *Ibid.*
324. *Ibid.*
325. *Ibid.*, pp.13-15.
326. *Ibid.*, Box to Director, 27/5/1952. Robertson's notes.
327. EDF 1519-51, Robertson's notes on the agenda for the PEB meeting 24/6/1955.
328. AR 1954, p.14.
329. EDF 1342-52 Superintendent of Curriculum and Research to Director, 26/8/1955.
330. *Ibid.*, p.3.
331. *Ibid.*, p.4.
332. *Ibid.*, p.20.
333. *Ibid.*, pp.20-23.
334. *Ibid.*, pp.18-19.
335. *Ibid.*, p.10.
336. *Education Act Amendment Act No. 72 of 1957.*
337. EDF 2021-58, Director to Minister, 21/4/1958.
338. EDF 1314-53 Director to Minister, 3/7/1958.
339. *Ibid.*
340. EDF 1057-56, Director to Minister, 3/7/1958.
341. *Ibid.*, 'Decision noted' 29/7/1958.
342. *Ibid.*, Director to Minister, 22/4/1959. Watts agreed to the delay, 30/4/1959.
343. The non-departmental members included J Paton (Chamber of Commerce) B MacKinly (Chamber of Manufacturers) J Bourke (Catholic Education) G Cameron (Free Churches) C Finn (Roman Catholic Church) R Freeth (Church of England) F Darling (Employers' Federation) W Noakes (Farmers' Union) GM Keyes (Headmasters' Association) V Summers (Headmistresses Association) C Daw/ H Kahan, V Leggat, F Wallace (Parents and Citizens'

- Association) J Pritchard (Retail Traders' Association) A King, R Kirk, C Sanders (University of WA) and A Peebles Youth Committees).
344. Secondary Schools Curriculum Committee (TL Robertson) *Interim Report of the Secondary Schools' Curriculum Committee*. Perth, Education Department of Western Australia, 1958, pp.9, 10, 35.
 345. *Ibid.* Press release, 8/8/1958.
 346. The Co-Educational, Comprehensive Community High School An Outline of the Policy of the Western Australian Education Department, *EC*, Vol. 60, No. 11, 1958, p238.
 347. *Ibid.*, pp.24-241.
 348. *WA*, 12/8/1958.
 349. EDF 1342-52, Director to Minister, 7/11/58.
 350. Deputation to Premier, *WATJ*, Vol. 49, No. 2, 1959, pp.23-29.
 351. EDF 1057-56 Director to Minister, 3/9/1960. Watts approved the scheme to operate from January 1961.
 352. EDF 460-59, Notes on conference, 5/12/1958.
 353. *Ibid.*
 354. *Ibid.*, Report on the Progress of the Secondary Schools Curriculum, October 1959.
 355. *Ibid.*
 356. *Ibid.*, Dr VA Summers, DGM Keys, Rev JE Bourke to Robertson. Worried about the Education Department's actions, the independent school headmasters and headmistresses had met on the 11/12/1959.
 357. *Ibid.*
 358. *Ibid.*, Director General to Independent School Heads, 24/1/1960.
 359. *Ibid.*, Notes on the meeting held 4/5/1960 are included in this file.
 360. *Ibid.*, Meeting with professorial board, 14/7/1960.
 361. *Ibid.*, Press release, 1/1/1961.
 362. PEB, Minutes of meetings held 26/9/1961 and 3/8/1962.
 363. *WA*, 12/4/1961. Neal was addressing the Country Women's Association annual conference.
 364. *WA*, 12/4/1961.
 365. EDF 1413-62, Director General to Minister, 16/11/1961.
 366. *Ibid.*, Director General to Minister, 16/11/1961.
 367. Education Department of Western Australia, *Report on Secondary Education 1963* (TL Robertson). Perth, Government Printer, 1963. The members included C Gladwin-Grove and M Williams (P&C), NE Sampson and C Cook (SSTUWA), N McLeod (Principal, Governor Stirling Senior High School), C Casey (Teacher, Perth Modern Senior High School), HW Dettman (Deputy Director-General of Education), FG Bradshaw (Director of Secondary Education), WD Neal (Director of Special Services), A Boylen (Deputy-Director of Secondary Education) and SW Woods (Superintendent of Research). In 1960 and amendment to the Education Act gave Robertson the title of Director-General of Education. The Superintendents heading divisions

(branches) became Directors. The reorganised administrative structure is outlined in AR 1960, p.5.

368. *Ibid.*, pp.3-7.
369. *Ibid.*, pp.52-54.
370. EDF 2021-58, Director General to Minister, 27/7/1962.
371. *Ibid.*, Director General to Cross, 8/8/1962, Cross to Director General, 15/8/1962 and Director General to Cross, 12/9/1962.
372. *Ibid.*, Director General to Minister, 15/9/1962 and *Education Act Amendment Act*, No. 37 of 1962. Also WA, 10/11/1962.
373. *Ibid.*, Director General to Minister, 18/9/1963.
374. *Ibid.*
375. *Ibid.*, Minister to Cabinet, 4/11/1963.
376. *Ibid.*, Brand to Lewis, 26/11/1963.
377. EDF 1632-57, Robertson to Lewis, 2/4/1964.
378. EDF 2021-58, Correspondence 4/5/1964 to 19/5/1964.
379. *Ibid.*, Townsing to Brand, 18/5/1964.
380. WA. 28/5/1964.
381. EDF 107-64, Cross to Minister, 10/7/1964.
382. *Ibid.*, Robertson to Lewis.
383. *Ibid.*, Lewis to Cabinet, 8/8/1964.
384. WA, 26/9/1965. See also *Education Act Amendment Act*, No. 26 of 1964.
385. WD Neal, *The Secondary school curriculum: a review of developments in Western Australia 1958-1964 with proposals for the future*. Perth, Education Department of Western Australia 1964, pp.16-17 and pp.14-19.
386. *Ibid.*, pp.20-21.
387. *Ibid.*, p.23.
388. *Ibid.*, p.26-27.
389. *Ibid.*, p.60.
390. See EDF 1673-64.
391. *Ibid.*, Meeting convened by W Woods, 12/3/1965.
392. *Ibid.*, Meeting held, 26/3/1965.
393. See JA Petch, *Report on the Public Examination system in Western Australia*. University of Western Australia, 1964.
394. EDF 1673-64, Correspondence included Neal to Director General, 15/11/1965, Director General to Neal, 6/1/1966 and Director General to Neal, 1/2/1966.
395. *Ibid.*, meeting held 24/6/1966.
396. EDF 1673-64, Meeting held 3/10/1966 and Loudon to Mosenson, 19/10/1966.
397. Report of the Committee on Secondary Education appointed by the Minister for Education in Western Australia under the chairmanship of Mr HW Dettman, Perth, February, 1969, *Secondary Education in Western Australia*. Perth, Education Department of Western Australia, 1969, Appendix 8, pp.141-144. See also EDF 458-69, Investigation into educational needs.
398. *Ibid.*, Superintendent of Secondary Education to Director, 18/1/1951.

399. *Ibid.*, Letter of transmittal. The members included the Deputy Director-General of Education JH Barton, the Director of Catholic Education Monsignor JE Bourke, the Director of Public Examination NR Collins, the head of St Hilda's Church of England School for Girls Una Mitchell, the Director of Secondary Education D Mossenson, the head of Christ Church Grammar School PM Moyes, the Principal of Hollywood Senior High School D McLeod, Professor C Sanders from the University of Western Australia, Mrs M Williams and the Director of Special Services, SW Wood.
400. *Ibid.*, pp.107-109.
401. *Ibid.*, p.77.
402. *Ibid.*, p.99.
403. EDF 282-73, FE McKenzie (Director, Board of Secondary Education) to Director of Education, 25/11/1974.
404. *Ibid.*, Court to Jones, 23/12/1974 and Jones to Court, 31/12/1974.
405. *Ibid.*, McKinnon to Court, 15/1/1975.
406. *Ibid.*, Correspondence between McKinnon and the Secretary of the chamber of Commerce, 3/11/1976-14/1/1977.
407. EDF 490-70, Court to Jones, 4/1/1979 and Jones to Court, 11/1/1979.
408. Panel appointed by the Minister for Education in Western Australia (TA Priest), *Review of Educational Standards in Lower-Secondary schools in Western Australia*. Perth, Education Department, 1981, p.2.
409. *Ibid.*, pp.13-14.
410. *Ibid.*, p.57.
411. W.M. Bartlett, *Western Australian Year Book No. 21-1983*, Perth, Government Printer, 1983, p.503.
412. AR 1983, pp.55-56.
413. See EDF 146-84.
414. AR 1982, p.51 and AR 1984, p.105.
415. HS Williams, Education and the World of Work, A Matter of Values, Presidential Address, in *Education and the World of Work*, Melbourne, Australian College of Education, 1979, pp.12-13.
416. Committee for the Schools Commission, *Schools in Australia: Report* (PH. Karmel) Canberra, Government Publishing Service, 1973, p.3.
417. Bartlett, p.194, *Western Australian Year Book No. 16-1977*, Perth Government Printer, 1977, p.193.
418. EDF 146-84, Position Statement by the Course Coordinating Committee, 27/3/1981.
419. AR 1982, pp.18-19.
420. EDF 146-84, *op. cit.*
421. The members included David Balfour, Dr John Bunday, Dr Max Collins, Michael Cross, Eileen Davies, Sr Denise Desmarchelier, William Dickinson, Vic Gronow, Ed. Harken, Ann-Marie Heine, Dr Peter Hill, Harry Lowden, Ron Loudon, Merrilees Lukin, Professor Barry McGaw, Peter Moyes, May O'Brien, Ron Oliver, Lesley Parker, Micharl Perrot, Neal Rudeforth, Dr Tony Ryan, Professor Michael Scriven, Jack Shanahan and Doug Timms. The inquiry

had an executive staff of three: Dr Stephen Hunter, Dr Nathan Hoffman and Jerry Skivinis.

- 422. The Committee of Inquiry into Education in Western Australia (Kim E Beazley), *Education in Western Australia*, Perth, Government Printer, 1984, p.27.
- 423. *Ibid.*, pp.53-57.
- 424. Report of the Ministerial Working Party on School Certification and Tertiary Admissions Procedures (Barry McGaw) *Assessment in the Upper Secondary School in Western Australia*, Perth, Government Printer, 1984, pp.xi-xv.
- 425. *AR* 1984, pp.21-22.
- 426. The author watched the process of differentiation in urban high schools and small rural district high schools.
- 427. *WA*, 16/5/2000.
- 428. *Fideliter*, February 2001, p.2.
- 429. *WA*, 16/5/2000.