

Year 12 changes not on the cards

Oscar Moodley

Education Minister Jo Palmer has ruled out “a formal review” of the 2014 policy to extend all Tasmanian high schools from year 10 to year 12.

As part of Thursday morning’s Budget Estimates hearings, the minister was pressed by the Member for Mersey Michael Gaffney and the Member for Nelson Meg Webb on the lack of success of the initiative over its decade-long tenure.

The policy was introduced in an effort to lift the state’s year 12 retention rate by ensuring all schools offer students the option to undertake year 11 and 12 studies without moving to a college.

However, more than a decade after the initiative was introduced, retention rates have risen by less than 4 per cent as of 2025.

Tasmania’s retention rate of 71.7 per cent sits well below the national figure of 81.5 per cent.

The initiative is costing Tasmanian taxpayers \$13.8m per year.

Ms Webb said the policy has “been in place and implemented over a 10-year period” so it “does take a significant amount of resourcing”.

“We’re in a budget that’s requiring us to look at operational efficiencies of great magnitude, so what’s being done to review that policy,” Ms Webb asked.

Ms Palmer said “regardless of postcode”, it’s about removing “any barrier to continue on”. “We’re really committed to the intent of that,” she said.

“This policy is not under review and at the moment, I have no intention of having a formal review around this.

“There is going to be this body of work that is done through a financial sustainability analysis, which will be looking right across the board.”