



**OFFICIAL REPORT**

**OF THE**

**STATES OF DELIBERATION**

**OF THE**

**ISLAND OF GUERNSEY**

**HANSARD**

**Royal Court House, Guernsey, Thursday, 20th March 2025**

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Alderney Representatives E. Hill and E. A. J. Snowdon

**The Clerk to the States of Deliberation**

S. M. D. Ross, Esq. (States' Greffier)

**Absent at the Evocation**

Deputy H. L. de Sausmarez (*relevée à 9h 39*); Deputy N.R. Inder (*absent de l'île*);  
Deputy J. P. Le Tocq (*relevé à 9h 39*); Deputy A. D. S. Matthews (*relevé à 9h 39*)

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# States of Deliberation

*The States met at 9.30 a.m.*

[THE BAILIFF *in the Chair*]

## PRAYERS

*The States' Greffier*

## EVOCATION

# Billet d'État VII

## COMMITTEE FOR EDUCATION, SPORT & CULTURE

### 4. Blanchelande College, Elizabeth College and The Ladies' College : Future Funding Arrangements – Debate continued

**The States' Greffier:** Billet d'État VII, Article 4 — the continuation of the debate.

5     **The Bailiff:** Before I call Deputy Queripel, yesterday afternoon I received a letter signed by seven  
Members requesting that there be a further vote in accordance with Article 3, paragraph 5 in respect  
of the Draft Reform (Guernsey) (Amendment) Law 2025. As I indicated yesterday, that means that  
the vote has not been approved for now, it will come back to the States. When it comes back to the  
States, which will probably now be in July of this year, so after the election, it will be a simple majority  
required of the Members voting at that time. But I just thought I would explain that to you so you  
10    know the answer..

Deputy Queripel.

**Deputy Queripel:** Thank you, sir.

15    Anyone who is undecided on this amendment must be in a real dilemma after listening to what  
I thought were the two outstanding speeches in this debate so far yesterday. One from Deputy  
Cameron, who is totally behind the ESC proposals against the amendment. The other was from  
Deputy Helyar, who is in favour of this amendment; excellent speech. Thankfully, I am not  
undecided. I am going to support this amendment. I think it is a great shame that Amendment 6  
did not get the support it needed because, in my view, it made perfect sense to amalgamate all the  
20    amendments, because by doing so it would have certainly truncated debate. It is ironic that the  
amendment told us that all the proposers of the amendments were in favour of the composite  
amendment because, when it came to debate, some of them obviously were not.

25    But in fact, I think some of them over-egged the pudding somewhat when they said they wanted  
the opportunity to make an opening speech on their amendment and then speak again in response  
to the debate. So they get two opportunities to fight their corner. Not only did that over-egg the  
pudding somewhat, in my view, but they were being just a little bit too precious when they could

and should have been a lot more pragmatic. We are where we should not be and we just have to deal with it.

As other Members have said when they have spoken, several parents of children at those colleges have said they have to work at not just one job but two in order to be able to afford to keep their children at the colleges. I empathise with them all, all the way down the line on that one, because parents have been doing that for decades. As my colleagues know, sir, both of my parents were disabled and in order to be able to raise a family of three boys, put food on the table, they had to make superhuman efforts, which meant my father had two jobs, a day job and an evening and Saturday job, and my mother had a full-time job, as well as raising a family.

When my wife and I were trying to buy a house, as well as bring up our son and put food on the table, we also had two jobs each, which meant we were both working at least 60 hours a week, with no social life whatsoever and certainly no holidays.

I really do get that trying to provide one's children with the best possible education takes an enormous amount of effort. When one is in that position, you hope and pray and long for some kind of certainty and some kind of balance.

I am going to support this amendment on the grounds that, as Deputy St Pier said in his opening speech, it is pragmatic, it is fair, and it is reasonable. The legal definition of the word 'reasonable', of course, as I have sought to ask the Comptroller and Procureur over the years, is the definition of the word 'reasonable' is that which is not excessive.

So on the issues of it being pragmatic and fair and reasonable, they are clearly laid out in the explanatory note, which for the benefit of people who have not seen the explanatory note, reads as follows:

This amendment Acknowledges the important, valued role the colleges play in our education system and that their stability is in the interests of the whole community; Introduces a lesser five-year period on a rolling basis.

And at that point, we are directed to the footnote, which reads:

During the last round of negotiation with the colleges before 2020, it was envisaged that any financial support could move to a rolling basis in order to avoid the periodic cliff edges which come from having a fixed term agreements.

And the last bullet point of the explanatory note reads this amendment:

Replaces the block grant with a fairer per qualifying student grant ensuring that if student numbers fall, as expected given forecast student numbers, the total grant paid will fall and does not rise as a proportion of the colleges' total income.

That all makes a lot of sense to me, even though it is a compromise, because it seems to me to be a pragmatic, fair and reasonable compromise.

To add to those reasons why I am supporting it, I am going to do so because to me it introduces some much-needed balance into the equation. Of course, if something is not balanced, then it is unbalanced.

Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy de Sausmarez, Deputy Le Tocq, and Deputy Matthews, is it each of your wishes to be relevéd?

**Deputy de Sausmarez:** Yes, please, sir.

**Deputy Matthews:** Thank you, sir.

**Deputy Le Tocq:** Yes, please, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Very good. Deputy Haskins.

75 **Deputy Haskins:** Thank you, sir.

I am going to start by declaring an interest. I have family at one of the colleges, all of my brothers and sisters went to one or another of the colleges, and I am actually an old Elizabethan. (*Interjection*)

I have huge respect for our colleges. Huge. I have huge respect for our States' provision. This debate is about clarifying the policy position on support to the private colleges. I think it is clear  
80 there is a lot of support, and quite rightly so, Members. We should be proud of them. Staff and students alike, they get fantastic results.

We should also be proud of our whole education system. I am. Our state system, our teachers and staff also do a fantastic job. We have a fantastic system and it is improving year on year.

The best speeches yesterday, in my opinion, and I absolutely agree with them, were  
85 Deputy Helyar and Deputy Murray. We should be investing more in education, more in our people, especially when looking for economic opportunity and growth. That goes for all people of all ages. Any good business will tell you, you are your people. Whatever business you are in, you are in the business of people. One of Guernsey's greatest strengths is its people. The more highly skilled we are, the more opportunities we have. The better we are as an Island, the more resilient we will be.

90 Like Deputy Helyar, I would remind Members that unless we introduce the revenue increases needed, then we are going to keep having these debates. Cuts left, right and centre that are simply unpalatable to many people. Deputy Helyar said the reality is we cannot cut ourselves out of this deficit. I agree. The other reality; cuts come at a cost. As I say, some of these costs will be too much for some Members.

95 Like many Members, I believe that the colleges are an economic enabler. So is our education system as a whole, and 70% of our secondary students are in the wider system. Investment in one should not be at the expense of another, and I will repeat that. Investment in one should not be at the expense of the other. I really hope, Members, that that comment speaks for itself.

100 It is clear where the debate is heading. The Assembly will not support Proposition 1 but cannot quite support Proposition 2. Like Deputy Inder said yesterday, the question is where on the scale does this Assembly want to land. This amendment is maintaining funding but introducing a five-year clause and per pupil funding rather than the block. So an improvement on Proposition 2, some might say.

105 There are of course no savings in this amendment. We do not seem to be delivering many savings right now, do we, Members? As Deputy Helyar remarked yesterday, perhaps we should not even be trying, particularly so late in the term. In fact, Members, what have we had recently? We have had the Dairy vote, so that is an extra £1.4 million a year. The incentivising the private care home market, £2.4 million a year by 2030. The new Housing Committee, that is circa £300,000 a year. The list goes on. Plenty of extra spend, but no extra revenue.

110 We have heard a lot of supportive emails for the continuation of funding. We have heard from Deputy Aldwell. The very same people understand the need for GST. They are listening to the debate. They will have heard the Chief Minister yesterday explain our over £70 million deficit. They do understand our financial position.

115 I also agree with something Deputy Kazantseva-Miller said yesterday, not quite the same way, but I sincerely believe we do need to think outside the box, especially given what is to come. The population demographic and the impact of artificial intelligence, the impact is going to be profound to our Island. Personally, I would like us to invest more in education for all ages and all sectors, and that includes home education. I would like us to address the birth rate for our local population.

120 Members, there are businesses here on Island that are now including IVF treatment to their healthcare packages. Surely that is a sign that we are not doing enough as Government. I would like us to help local people afford a house and help our young people stay on Island. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) So in a twist of something Richard Branson said, take care of our children and they will take care of our future.

125 It is not really about this amendment, so I will get back to this. Will Members support Proposition  
1? No. Will Members support Proposition 2? I doubt it. This amendment addresses a couple of  
problems with Proposition 2, so personally I prefer it to Proposition 2. In light of this, and in the  
spirit of compromise, I could vote for this. But I would prefer to vote for Deputy Inder and  
Deputy Prow's amendment or Deputy Roffey's amendment. ESC was tasked with this rather  
unenviable task and it has not shied away from the task. And I thank Deputy Ferbrache for his  
130 acknowledgement on this.

I ask Members, and really ask yourselves, why are we trying to impose some of these difficult  
cuts at the expense of our children's futures? I hope the next Assembly takes heed and, in the wise  
words of Deputy Trott, we need to act expeditiously to solve our revenue deficit. Members, you  
have seen the policy letter, you have heard counter-debates, you will hear more soon, the choice is  
135 yours.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy De Lisle.

**Deputy De Lisle:** Thank you, sir.

140 Just a few words from me. The States, and I find it very difficult to understand the Committee  
wanting a reduction in the grant because the States have made major savings in the secondary  
sector in recent years. First of all, with the reduction of grant to the colleges from £5 million to  
£3 million in 2016. Then there is the withdrawal of placeholders, which saved three quarters of a  
million each intake, which is about another £6 million. Today, the colleges are educating 30% of the  
145 Island's secondary school districts children, a great saving to the States (**A Member:** Hear, hear.)  
and Guernsey tax payers and to the ESC budget; 1,200 students at £8,000 to £10,000 a year saves  
over £10 million. That is a lot of money. So what is all this about reducing the grant to the colleges  
at the current time?

We have reduced our commitment in major proportions over the last few years, with the current  
150 secondary comprehensive model already giving lower results and disappointment. We have lost the  
middle way provided by the grammar school; the intermediate as it used to be called. Many want  
change as they see the current system failing to produce the results of the past.

People are choosing at great cost to themselves to put their children in private education  
because the state system is not working for their children as they see it. They speak of the effect of  
155 students of multiple teachers per subject each year. It leads to poor class discipline and the  
enormous cost of staff turnover and the disruption of children's education and agency supply  
teachers, of course, to cover the staff turnover, which is also costing money. I would like to know  
how much.

Doing away with the grant to the private colleges after the major savings to the States over the  
160 years is reckless for both the future of our young people and our economy. The colleges provide  
very good value for money and bring substantial benefits to the community, and we have to  
recognise this as a States' body.

The extra individual support and attention to students in smaller classes is commendable, and  
I will vote to retain the status quo, and I will not support proposals to cut funding to the private  
165 colleges.

Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Blin.

170 **Deputy Blin:** Thank you, sir.

I very much appreciated the speeches by the Members and I also very much appreciated the  
volume and the detailed emails we have received from the public. I think it was mentioned that they  
were maybe cut and paste but they were not. They were very, very specific talking about their  
backgrounds, the individuals. I will apologise while I am here that I have only managed to reply to  
175 about 48 or 50 because I was trying to put the same efforts back into each individual person's belief.



What we are talking about, speaking to the amendments, this decision is going to have a profound and lasting impact in Guernsey's education system. The proposal to remove college funding entirely or even in steps is too much of an extreme step that risks destabilising a sector that has served this Island well for generations, but at the same time maintaining funding indefinitely without reassessment is neither realistic nor sustainable. That is why this amendment represents, in my opinion, the best way forward, a compromise that provides stability while recognising the need for change.

This is not a debate about whether parents should have the right to send their children to private schools; that choice remains. The real issue is how we consider the funding in a way that avoids unnecessary disruption, ensures fairness and protects our education system as a whole.

Lots of people have referred to the economic side of it, and I just want to repeat, it has been mentioned many times, but the colleges educate 30% of secondary school students for just 3% of the Education budget. This we all see is value; exceptional value. But a decision to withdraw funding is simply not a responsible option. We saw by the volume of emails that many middle income families make huge sacrifices to afford school fees. While some will be able to absorb an increase, others will not.

This could force many children out of the colleges and into the state system, a system which I believe has been led very well by the President of ESC and the schools and the teachers and the teams, and is working hard on improving. As Deputy Haskins said, it is improving all the time. They are doing a good job, but there are issues, staffing issues, transition, etc.

Have we considered what impact this will have on our teachers, our students and the infrastructure of our schools? The current proposal assumes that only 10% of the students may move to state schools, but this is only an assumption, not a guarantee. If that number were to be higher, the supposed savings could evaporate, or even cost the States more in the long run.

Guernsey also needs to remain competitive as a place to live and work. Jersey continues to subsidise independent education and we must consider what removing funding entirely could signal to professionals looking to relocate.

**Deputy Burford:** Point of correction, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Point of correction, Deputy Burford.

**Deputy Burford:** Thank you.

Just a minor point in Deputy Blin's speech where he said about 10% of children moving, it is actually a third. It is 10% of the overall pupil number so it does represent a third rather than just 10% of the college students.

Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Blin.

**Deputy Blin:** Yes, I thank Deputy Burford.

Referring to competitive place. The Jersey education system, we all know, and I am just going to add a little point – sorry, I was slightly distracted, but I am just going to add a little point. From my work in recruitment, I have worked for many years watching the students coming out of the colleges having opportunities which the finance businesses very much appreciated. It does not mean others from other schools do not have that but that is something which has got a significant impact on the economy, and that must be included into this debate.

If education does become less accessible and more expensive we risk driving talent away, and that will impact our economy, impact our tax base and our ability to sustain our services. This amendment strikes the right balance. It ensures a managed transition for families, avoids unnecessary shocks to the education system, and allows time to assess the real impact of change.

Education should not be treated as a political battleground. We must be pragmatic and responsible in how we move forward.

I do support this amendment. It is the most measured, sustainable and practical way for Guernsey's education system and its future.

Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy McKenna.

**Deputy McKenna:** Sir, if I could speak and forego my right to speak in general debate. I thought Deputy St Pier's opening was absolutely excellent. I think the Chief Minister saying we do our best when we compromise, I think was an excellent thing that was said. When Deputy Helyar mentioned that the amount of money we are talking about is 0.03%, I think that is what he said, he also explained to me we spend more on the Airport workers' overtime than we do on this education grant.

I was not a college pupil, I went to the Old Boys Grammar but I did hear many OEs speak almost with a reverence to one of their retired history teachers, and I think that is probably the gentleman who is in the gallery today, Mr John Hooker. Now I know Mr Hooker from the Royal Guernsey Golf Club and we have spent many a wonderful afternoon where we actually – I think the last time we watched Elizabeth College beat Victoria College in the golf, which was a wonderful achievement. *(Interjection)*

But the speech for me which was very forensic, analytical, it was passionate and compassionate, came from Deputy Ferbrache, and I just thought it was a shame for me that I heard it so early on in debate. I wish it had have been this morning. I am not sure if I am allowed to, but if I could just give way to some of the key points. No, okay. I thought it was absolutely brilliant.

I think what it was saying is, I do not believe that any of these older Elizabethans are in any way detrimental to those in the state school. I think what they are saying is, they want the best for everybody. If anything, I think what we should be concentrating on is what can we do to make maybe the state schools, in what you admire in the colleges, maybe we should look at the state schools and say, so if it needs more funding, maybe the debate we should be having is how do we get more funding for the state schools to achieve *(Interjection)* that level of attainment.

For me, I do not feel I should be standing here talking today because to me, those in academia, the teachers, the teachers are the ones who know what is best for their pupils. The teachers actually – I do not really see teaching as a job, I see it as a vocation because they give their life. I am sure most teachers spend most of their time in their extracurricular activities than they actually do in their day job. They are full of devotion and I have admired many teachers from – one in particular from La Mare De Carteret, who devotes so many hours in football and swimming and different things. I am a great admirer of the state system. But I think listening to what Deputy Ferbrache, Deputy St Pier, Deputy Helyar and many have said, we are talking about 0.003%. I think we have got to support the colleges. Let us support the colleges and admire them for what they do.

Deputy Ferbrache would always say to me, 'What is your suggestion? What would you do? Give me something' and the only thing I could think of last night is I would try to introduce a combined cadet force into the secondary education, because –

**A Member:** With soldiers?

**Deputy McKenna:** Well, remember it is the Army, Navy and Royal Air Force, because it gives – well, it certainly gave my two sons a credibility and a discipline to a hierarchy in those institutions, so that would be the only suggestion.

Now, logistically it is extremely difficult because you need instructions that have to be qualified. We do not have that. My suggestion would only be maybe we ask the Lieutenant Governor, General Cripwell, who is not here this morning. He is the former Commander of NATO's land forces. If anyone could logically make it happen, I am sure he could. I give way.

280 **Deputy Dudley-Owen:** Thank you to Deputy McKenna, sir, for giving way because this is an area that I have actually already started to explore some years ago. It is not easy. I have close family members in the military and it is an area very close to my heart, the cadet force, and I know the benefits that it has brought, but unfortunately it is not simple, in that the funding comes from the MoD, but it is certainly on our radar.

285 The Director of Education has been involved in those conversations as well and anything that we can do to push those forward, because obviously there are two cadet forces in Guernsey, but the benefits that the colleges get is that they actually have it built in as part of their timetable on a Friday, whereas all Island children who do not go to Elizabeth College do not get that benefit and have to go after hours, which means sometimes – if you are a vulnerable young person – you may  
290 not be able to get to that place without the support. It is definitely on our radar.

**Deputy McKenna:** Yes, Deputy Dudley-Owen is absolutely right, the children in the state schools, if they want to go into the military, have to go to the ACF and do that outside of their curriculum. Maybe it is something that should be introduced in the state schools, just like the  
295 colleges, on a Friday. Logistically it is very difficult because you cannot have children from – or not children, you cannot have instructors from different education settings going into the armoury at Elizabeth College and not knowing all – so it is very difficult.

But back to the point, sir, I think we support the colleges. For me, Deputy Ferbrache's speech – I remember Oscar Wilde once heard a speech and said to his friend, 'I wish I had said that.' He said,  
300 'Do not worry, Oscar, you will.' Well, I can tell you, when I listen to Deputy Ferbrache, I often think, like Oscar Wilde, I hope one day to be able to repeat something that is maybe not so rubbish or frivolous, but something so analytical and forensic like Deputy Ferbrache does.

Thank you.

305 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Bury.

**Deputy Bury:** Thank you, sir.

Like many others, I will probably only speak once on the funding amendments. Without wanting to sound trite, I have been on quite a journey with this one. My natural starting point probably will  
310 not come as a surprise to anyone. It was one of being pretty cold to the idea of our money being diverted from our States' settings and instead going to private fee-paying schools, but through attending the presentations put on by both ESC and the colleges, meeting with the Elizabeth College principal and reading – but, sadly, not yet even nearly having been able to reply to all of the emails that have been sent to us – I have warmed somewhat to the arguments coming from the  
315 private sector.

I will admit that when I started out on my thinking journey for this debate that I most definitely had a bias, that the three colleges were full of wealthy families, but I am happy to say that my viewpoint has changed and that bias has been shifted. I am genuinely happy about that, sir, because I think it is a good thing to have one's mind opened to new ideas and different ways of thinking. (A  
320 **Member:** Hear, hear.)

Some of the emails that have come through in support of the continuation of funding are from people I know, people that I would not put in the rich, wealthy or high-net-worth brackets. Some of the stories shared, they are also a story that I know. I really do know it, because it is very similar to mine. It may come as a surprise to some – or many, sir – that I did in fact attend a private school,  
325 not here in Guernsey, as I did my school years in the UK, but as a family it was something we could not afford.

I was there on an assisted place, a subsidised assisted place, which I believe at the time was the UK Government scheme, akin to Guernsey's special placeholders. It was sort of a mish-mash of means-tested and ability. I am grateful for that and for the education I received at that school, but  
330 of course I have no comparison to make as to how I would have fared should I have taken a different

path. I say I am grateful – I am now, but as a teenager I was not. I did not want to go to the posh different school that my friends were not going to. While that settled down, as it naturally would, the other negative was the experience of being a poor kid in a rich kid school. It was not one that I particularly enjoyed, nor would I recommend, but resilience was learned and that has come in quite handy.

So, as I said, sir, these stories have truly reached me and I recognise what a lot of these parents are telling us, but before anyone gets too excited, I have not shifted enough in that direction to be zealously supporting original Proposition 2. So why would that be, despite what I have just said? Well, while many of the emails have spoken to me, many have not. They have actually had the opposite effect to that which was intended. I think some of them are probably the ones that Deputy Aldwell was referencing yesterday.

Some of the points – the point Deputy Cameron made yesterday regarding many people referring to our future leaders (**A Member**: Hear, hear.) as though it is only the independent schools that produce any was a particularly good way to get my back up. (*Laughter*) References to being middle income was also another good one, when it was quite clear that some of the people that were in touch are far above middle income. I do mean it was quite clear because they provided the figures.

I also liked Deputy Dyke's yesterday, which was about people renting a room to help with fees. Yes, that is potentially a sacrifice to be made, but seemingly missing the point that they had a spare room to rent in the first place. This, I think, is where it becomes a matter of perspective, because while some of the people paying these fees I realise now are not rich or even particularly well off, and they are making big sacrifices, they also – very importantly – are not poor either.

We have people living in poverty in Guernsey, and that is an absolute world away from where most of these people are, because the people in real poverty in Guernsey have absolutely no chance of scraping together enough to afford going to a private school. (**A Member**: Hear, hear.) They are too busy worrying about where the next meal is coming from or if they have money to put on their electricity meter. (**A Member**: Hear, hear.) To that end, they are probably too busy worrying about those sort of things to be emailing their Deputies either, so I would not take the ratio of emails of support versus against the proposals as representative. It is our job to worry about those that cannot advocate for themselves, as well as those that can.

There have been a number of emails in support of the proposals. Someone said yesterday that there has only been four, which I think was in jest, to make a point. However, I think it important to make the point – in case the jest was missed – that it has been far more. Many of these I know have come from educationalists, our teachers in state settings that really see and know how budgets affect what is going on on the ground in our schools. One that came in only last night I hope that Members have had time to read was very eloquent and from a stalwart of our local education system. These are not views to be dismissed lightly.

So how do I look at those people and explain that we think it is right that their tax money goes to fund private school fees rather than helping children in state schools? I am not sure I can, sir. We can make it as complicated as we like by throwing around possible consequences and doom mongering about the tsunami of students we will have into the state schools, or we can make it as simple as we like and say to people that can no way, no however even contemplate affording a space at a private school that we are going to redirect funds to where it is needed in our state schools. My, my, it is certainly needed.

There has been a lot spoken from both sides about students with SEND, which I think is now referred to as ALN, Additional Learning Needs. These needs are increasing exponentially in our young people and, quite frankly, our schools are not able to keep up. We have some fantastic provision, such as Les Voies and Le Murier, as well as CIAS spaces at schools and the IOTAS service but, and this is from personal experience, our schools are not able to provide for the individual needs of all of our children, especially those that are neurodivergent.

This – as a slight aside, but it is still a very pertinent point, I think – brings me on to a group of people that are actually saving the States money in education terms, genuinely not costing them a

penny, and that is the home education community. It is small, just shy of 1.6% of primary and secondary pupils are home educated, but I know – and again, this is from personal experience – that many of those families remove their children from state schools because the schools cannot support them in the way that is needed, but the independent school is just not an option for them financially. So for many of those families it is a necessity, not a choice, to home educate their children, then – I will give way to Deputy Trott.

**Deputy Trott:** I am very grateful to my friend, Deputy Bury, for giving way in what is a typically thoughtful speech. I just wanted to mention that there are bursaries available, up to full bursaries, for families who are struggling. Part of that is the very generous legacy left by a former Member of this Assembly, former Deputy Roger Perrot.

**A Member:** Hear, hear.

**Deputy Bury:** I thank Deputy Trott for his intervention.

As I was saying, for many of those families, it is not a choice to home educate their children. Also, just to add salt in the wound, when they have not been provided for in the state schools, they have saved the States a fortune in education, paid for their own tutoring, they are not then even allowed to access exams without having to pay for those too, but that is a debate for another day.

To those people, I can see how the idea of funds going to the private colleges is absolutely preposterous. They would want to see those funds used in our state schools so that all of our children can access an education and be supported appropriately, whatever their need. In fact, I would go as far to say that while it is commendable that ESC have attempted to bring savings to the table here, on this point I rather agree with Deputy Helyar that this probably is not the right area to be doing it in. I would have actually rather seen all of the savings going back to schools rather than to the centre.

Another point I would like to address is the notion of social mobility that keeps getting raised. I fully take on board that this is a positive thing. We have been provided data and evidence of where this is done elsewhere in the world and it makes for interesting reading. However, considering we are at 30% of children being educated privately versus the UK's 6% or 7%, I believe, would it not be fair to say that we are absolutely smashing social mobility as a concept? Even if there was a slight dip in that percentage, we would still be way ahead of the pack of comparable jurisdictions.

As I begin to draw to a conclusion, sir, as is hopefully apparent, I have genuinely been very torn on this. I have really listened to both sides of the debate and arguments on both sides do have real merit. In an instance such as this, when the facts and information have not swayed me either way and I still find myself undecided, I find it best to return to my core values and to let them guide me.

When I stood for election, I told the people in Guernsey who do not feel they have a voice or feel that they are represented in our Government that I would endeavour to be that for them, so with an Assembly that has more old Elizabethans in it than it does women (*Laughter*) as well as a sizeable number of fee-paying parents or grandparents, I do not think the private colleges need me in their corner as well.

So, sir, if we had only been deciding between the original Propositions, I would have supported ESC's proposals. Perhaps not as wholly as I might have been at the start of the journey, but supporting them all the same, but we have been offered other options, sir, and because of how torn I have been, I am supremely grateful to those that have managed to find the time to draw up amendments and offer a compromise position to work with.

I am unsure if this is the one that I will go with. It is a slight improvement on the original Propositions, but like Deputy Taylor, I really do not like the five-year notice period. I think that is an exceptionally long time to be tied. I think I favour the Roffey/Burford amendment (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) and will vote for that, but it is a TBC as to whether I vote for this one in the meantime.

Thank you, sir.

435 **The Bailiff:** While I do not see anyone else rising to speak on Amendment 1, I will turn to the President of the Committee, Deputy Dudley-Owen.

**Deputy Dudley-Owen:** Thank you, sir.

440 I am really pleased to rise after Deputy Bury's speech, one of quite a few very good speeches that we have heard over the last few days. The notable ones for me are Deputy Haskins this morning, Deputy Helyar yesterday after and Deputy Ferbrache, but I am really pleased to have had such – overall – an engaging debate, which I have been genuinely interested in.

445 I would like to cover first of some points related to this amendment, and then I do apologise, because I know it is not my job to sum up, but it certainly is my job to set the record straight and possibly respond on behalf of the Committee to some of the statements that have been made during the course of this debate.

In relation to the amendment, I do have some concerns about the wording used and the structure, which has been noted by some colleagues, and it is specifically in the first bullet point. Sorry, I am just trying to find my page, sir. Yes, 'to agree the following in its entirety' and where we have a descriptor, I know that Deputy St Pier likes to put descriptors and maybe a little bit of colour in his amendments. I am not so keen, unless we can absolutely quantify those.

455 While the words 'integral' and 'valued' I absolutely agree with, 'valuable' is one that I do query, insofar as: by what objective measure? So far we have not quantified that objective measure attached to that word 'valuable' so I am not comfortable particularly with that word being in there, unless of course we can quantify it, which is what people have alluded to in terms of the economic value, but I would suggest that that is a rabbit hole. While initially I thought that would be easy to quantify, the more I think about it, it is an extremely complex area to carve out either one sector or even one school out of the education system and quantify the value that that returns to the Island. I think it is almost impossible, actually. We would have to do the whole education sector.

460 I support the idea of a cap provided per-pupil funding. I think that that is very sensible. I think that that starts to nudge the relationship by way of this grant, which I have continuously described as imperfect, into a little bit of a better place. But I have real difficulty that this particular amendment returns no savings and makes no attempt whatsoever to return savings. I think that that should be a problem for every single Member of this Assembly, given our Chief Minister's update yesterday. 465 How can we approve a funding deal that makes absolutely no attempt to sharpen its pencil, so to speak, when all service areas have been under pressure, all public funding has been under scrutiny, yet no attempt in this particular amendment to acknowledge that and make those savings?

It also retains a power, so to speak – for want of a better phrase – that allows the ability, let us say, for the colleges to distribute the grant between themselves as they see fit, other than on a per-pupil basis. Therefore there is a real possibility in some years that one or more colleges will get disproportionately less States' support than another college. If the colleges are arguing that States' funding keeps the fees down, which essentially is what we have heard, that that is why it has elicited a deluge of emails from very concerned parents that their fees will automatically increase if the States' funding reduces, which the Committee does not agree with, then why would one of those colleges not have to therefore increase their fees if they gift their share to another by the proposal in this agreement? It does not make sense.

480 Deputy Taylor's remarks yesterday were astute and should be borne in mind – Deputy Bury has just repeated those – in relation to the construction of the amendment, whereby the States could give notice to the colleges for a five-year withdrawal, which is exactly what the Committee has recommended, but actually it is a long lead-in period, and because it goes over States' terms, it really fetters future States, I would suggest.

485 I am going to read an email, sir, relating to comments that have gone through the debate on the costs of capital and the cost of education per pupil. Now, this was an email that was sent around to States Members on 10th March – I think it was 10th March – a couple of weeks ago on a Monday. I will just read from this because I want to state that these are not my figures. I do not do these figures; it is not our job as politicians to do these figures. So:

These figures amount to £10,316 per pupil and that the Committee has released a number of iterations of the cost per pupil in differing scenarios in previous years. These have been for specific scenarios or to respond to specific requests. So the figure that has been released by Education for the sake of studying this particular policy proposal is related to the composition that we have looked at, not in response to say, for example, what Deputy de Sausmarez asked for some years ago, or a figure that might have been used for Treasury for new candidates, which was built on different scenarios. The figures released here are a revenue figure directly comparable with the services provided with the grant-aided colleges, and Deputy Le Tocq has pointed out that it is an apples and pears scenario. These revenue costs have been peer reviewed internally to ensure they align with the principles of the current policy letter. Capital cost has been a point of discussion. This has been reviewed by the States of Guernsey Central Finance and due to the very difficult nature of each of the school campuses, the varying uses of each campus and the length of asset life, this cost is not considered material or comparable for this exercise, having noted this provision of Education is a low capital intensive service, so the materiality of capital cost should be very low and have very little effect on the overall cost per pupil.

490 So we can do the maths on our own, we can look at these particular headline figures, but without taking time to analyse them with the people who live and breathe them, I think it is almost impossible to say – verging on misleading – to be putting out different scenarios of what these costs are, and I personally would not want to risk it myself.

495 Deputy Ferbrache, I must thank you – through you, sir – for generous comments regarding recognising the work of the Committee. It has been no mean feat over this term and has taken a team effort from the Committee and supporting officers and political colleagues to get us to where we need to be. Our Principal Officer, the Director of Education, has demonstrated extremely strong leadership qualities in changing the culture and setting a course for excellence.

500 I mentioned Deputy Ferbrache last week on the *Guernsey Press* podcast because for me, sir, he exemplifies how the selective system was intended to work. In post-war Britain up to approximately the 1990s, it did a sterling job for social mobility for so many, but times have changed and the Ferbrache model – let us call it that – is no longer recognisable. That was obvious during the various selection debates that we had.

505 The colleges are much less diverse than they were, and while I appreciate that Deputy Ferbrache was unhappy seeing the figures in the policy letter related to household income, it has undoubtedly caused pause for thought, and was intended to highlight equity and fairness, certainly not division.

510 Deputy Roffey set out very clearly the reality that the grant has been increasing and that this was a temporary measure, and it was never intended in the last term for it to be baked in via this imperfect mechanism of a grant, which is what is going to happen today with the passing of this amendment, which I think undoubtedly will pass. But he spoke about a reduction in the grant, and I agree that even a small reduction in the grant is a more acceptable position when funds are so tight and when other publicly-funded organisations and services have had to do the same with even more or with less. There is a huge pressure for us to consistently do more than we do now, but with less money.

515 The thought to move to capped per pupil starts to shift the policy dial, as I have said, albeit in a small way, towards a more cogent place with this policy. Deputy Le Tocq made some insightful comments and demonstrated the complexity of trying to draw comparisons, as I said, and the States in this regard – I think it is really important to mention the States run a system of education. There are 20 school settings within it. We do not run individual schools, but the colleges, conversely, are not a system. They are largely independent of each other, bar one, of their shared sixth form provisions, and they compete for market share, although albeit in a not-for-profit approach.

520 Deputy Vermeulen queried the spend on reinvestment, and Members can see, if they are prepared to look, on page 54 of the policy letter that there are various areas highlighted that should be seen as indicative areas that the Committee could spend the savings on and should feature as part of the Committee's handover report in the same way that all Committees should be preparing now for their successor Committees to take over in July of this year.

525 It must be remembered – it cannot go without being commented upon – both Deputies Dyke and Deputy Vermeulen argued, and have argued consistently, vociferously, for cuts to budgets and savings to be made, and the effect, just to – because Deputy Dyke did not appear to recall the

530 amendment that he had put in place just last November, the effect of the amendment – I will give way to Deputy Dyke.

535 **Deputy Dyke:** We have heard a lot of talk about the budgetary effects of this, but I think a lot of us see the figures as indicating that there will not – if the original Education proposal is put through, there will not be savings. I know there is an argument about whether we are including capital and all that sort of thing, but broadly, the ESC proposal will not create savings because it will put more people back in the States' system – it is difficult to know the numbers, but it will – at much increased cost vis-à-vis what the States are paying for the grant to the colleges. To say that this is a money-saving measure proposed by ESC, it simply is not.

Thank you.

540 **Deputy Dudley-Owen:** Thank you, sir.

As I was saying, Deputies Dyke and Vermeulen have argued vociferously for cuts, and the effect of the amendment that they laid during the Budget in 2024 would have had an effect of removing £4 million from the Committee's budget in fell swoop, £4 million. It would have had similar devastating effects for Health and for the Committee for Home Affairs and others. It is one – I am not going to give way.

**Deputy Dyke:** Sorry, a point of correction. Well, thank you for giving way, that is very –

550 **The Bailiff:** A point of correction, Deputy Dyke.

**Deputy Dyke:** – generous. (*Laughter*) The Budget amendment that I brought was for a 4.2% amendment in the overall Budget, a reduction in the overall Budget, which would be applied or could be applied in various ways. It could also be dealt with on the staging of capital funding. There was no £4 million cut to Education.

Thank you.

**Deputy Dudley-Owen:** Thank you, sir.

560 The effect of the amendment that was moved by the two Deputies was a £4 million cut to the Budget, as confirmed by Treasury officials, so it is disappointing that the Deputy does not recognise the effects of his own amendment that he brought.

Now, I would also like to – Deputy Soulsby made some comments yesterday relating to increases in budget and I would like to again just repeat that note of caution here, because we all recognise that Committees' budgets are complex. The exchange that I have just had with Deputy Dyke I think really demonstrates that, where the effects of budget and budget reductions are very complex. We have to drill down into the line items. So much has changed in recent years. From the figures bandied around from 2017 to nearly a decade later, Education is a completely different place. The monies relating to COVID recovery, vacancy factor rates have changed, rent allowances payments now sit with the Committee, property maintenance and management –

570 **Deputy Soulsby:** Point of correction, sir.

**The Bailiff:** A point of correction, Deputy Soulsby.

575 **Deputy Soulsby:** My figures were taken from the beginning of this term, not 2017, from what the Budget was at the beginning of the term to whatever it is now. It is £10 million.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Dudley-Owen.



**Deputy Dudley-Owen:** Sir, the areas that I am talking about have happened all this term: COVID recovery, vacancy factor rates changing, rent allowances payments now shifting, sitting with the Committee, property maintenance and management costs have shifted, new staffing structures have been introduced. There are so many areas that to do very quick and high-level calculations without sitting down with the people who live and breathe this every day is fraught with risk of misleading through oversimplification of complex data and budget processes.

Now, I will also make the comment here, because 35 Members voted in favour of the sub-committee's work on savings – the savings sub-committee, as it has been known – and that was just in November. Now, this is specifically in relation to reducing the cost of public services. A theme that has resonated and resonated, it has run like a torrent through this particular Assembly of reducing the cost of public services.

Now, if Members did not want to take on board the savings that were within that particular document, a huge amount of work done by not just politicians, but officers as well, and officer time equals money, contributions made by members of the public, what a waste of time that was. What a waste of time that was, because if we are not going to approve it, if they were not the right savings targets, why on earth did the sub-committee recommend it to the States? Then commensurately, why on earth did the States approve it? If they were not going to be able to swallow the hard effects of what these recommendations would be – and this reminds me of the Herms School debate, because we are back in this sort of arena. Please, Members, if you have not got the heart, the stomach, to be able to make these cuts, do not even think about talking about them in the first place. Recognise that we need an increase in revenue, that Government will inevitably get bigger because the needs of our Island are such that we are trying to meet them and swallow the hard decisions.

But GST debates, the Sweet Caroline rhetoric of being able to magic up money from different areas other than from raising revenue is just absolute fantasy. It is balderdash, is it not, Deputy Trott? I will give way.

**Deputy Trott:** Thank you, I am very grateful to my colleague for giving way, who I think is doing a very good job in very difficult circumstances, I hasten to add.

I did describe the calculation, the omission of capital, as balderdash, it clearly is, it is not how the private sector would operate. I mentioned yesterday that an update had been given to the Policy & Resources Committee members where if you brought into account capital, the number for the cost of educating a child in the state sector, in the secondary sector, would rise materially. However, the Policy & Resources Committee believes that that number is even higher than calculated by our staff, so I do not think that the President had recalled that conversation.

**Deputy Dudley-Owen:** No, I do not think I was involved.

**Deputy Trott:** No, well you were not. You recalled my speech.

So I want to make that clear. I do not think the numbers are particularly relevant, I think others have said that, but they are substantially higher than currently reported.

**A Member:** Hear, hear.

**Deputy Dudley-Owen:** Thank you to the Chief Minister for his intervention there. As he knows, these figures come from Central and we do not calculate them ourselves. Our opinions are one thing but the facts often speak for themselves.

I would also go on to talk here about picking up on a theme that my Vice President has spoken about today and others, Deputy Bury, that in fact spending on education should increase. The world we know is changing and children and young people are presenting with complexities that Deputy Bury mentioned that we have not seen, you know, even 10 years ago were not apparent.

Schools are undoubtedly the front line for this. The value of the pastoral support that they offer to vulnerable children must be acknowledged.

We had a very compelling email from one of our senior leaders in the state sector overnight talking to exactly this, a very experienced individual. I know that college leaders also will be agreeing with this if they are listening, because they too see these problems.

For example, we are thinking about discussions relating to mobile phones and the fact that schools have to spend a disproportionate amount of their time on these matters that happen outside of school. Anxiety, autism spectrum disorders, all of these sort of things that previously in our days at school we were not having to deal with.

But there is a crucial difference. The colleges are able, and their websites confirm this, they are able to recharge their parents for children who need additional support, whereas we can only provide that support to the majority of children and young people via a revenue budget uplift. The state sector noticeably is lacking in benefactors. The state sector, I have never ever heard of a high-net-worth individual leaving the States a bequest in their will. So if anyone is out there, who is a high-net-worth individual, who is thinking about where to put their money, then please think about a bequest to the States' maintained sector. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) That would be wonderful.

I make no apologies for lobbying here, because it is a spend to save and if we can address these problems at an early stage of life, we are definitely reducing the strain on future budgets for HSC, ESS and Home Affairs. Comments about the absorption of any movement of students to the state schools demonstrates a misunderstanding of the scale of the system and the ability of the Committee to be able to change catchment areas or encourage out of area placements, which it occasionally does to ensure an even distribution across schools. Remember that the colleges have an all-Island catchment, so many of their parents are used to managing transport arrangements for their children.

Now, I will not address any further comments from Members because it would take too much time, but what I would just say in closing is that this amendment makes no attempt to deliver savings to the States, it makes no attempt to reinvest really desperately needed funds for the States' education system, which supports the majority and the most vulnerable of our children and young people.

Sir, for that reason, I believe that this is the least favourable of the amendments that we have in front of us in relation to the grant funding.

Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Finally, I will invite the proposer of Amendment 1, Deputy St Pier, to reply to the debate.

**Deputy St Pier:** Thank you, sir, and thank you to those that have spoken in the debate.

Thank you to those that have indicated their support for this amendment. I am turning first and dealing with Deputy Dudley-Owen's comments both at the beginning and the end of her closing speech there that this amendment fails to deliver savings. It is worth reminding Members of course that the existing Proposition 2 presented by the Committee – in other words the Committee's own Propositions – equally does not attempt to deliver savings. It is made clear in the explanatory note in Rule 4.1, the financial implications to the state of carrying the proposal into effect will not exceed those pertaining to original Proposition 2.

I should also say that many Members have declared an interest in this debate, but I think none more so than Deputy Vermeulen, who indeed wore his vested declaration of interest with his blazer yesterday and his OE tie today. I do not think there is any provision in the Rules that allows a declaration of interest by attire, but certainly Deputy Vermeulen has now introduced that by practice, so I would like to congratulate him on that.

It has been an extensive debate. There are only really a few matters to respond to, and I think dealing with Deputy Taylor's question in relation to whether the reference to a five-year rolling

arrangement in the Propositions is in some way binding or contractual, and I am sure His Majesty's Procureur will comment, should she wish to do so, or disagree with my assessment and response.

685 But my view, sir, is this Proposition, if it becomes a resolution, is no more than any other resolution. It is simply a direction to the States, but it would be a direction which the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture that would then turn into an agreement with the colleges and indeed as it has done in the previous two arrangements that would incorporate that provision. So there would be some form of contractual arrangement between the States and the colleges through that arrangement following this direction. I would suggest that it would not be binding directly by virtue  
690 of this resolution, but by the subsequent actions of the Committee under the direction of this Assembly.

I think that there has clearly been some concern about the reference to five years and whether it is too long. I think Deputy Bury also made reference to this in her speech and it is worth perhaps drawing attention to the fact that in Deputy Roffey's amendment, which I think may well be debated  
695 next, actually potentially the commitment is longer of course because it envisages, as is provided in the final bullet point, to direct Education, Sport & Culture to return to the States with proposals for a new funding arrangement for the academic years 2033-34. So we are committing for seven years and then going potentially beyond that. I think it is really the decision around – I will give way to Deputy Roffey.

700 **Deputy Roffey:** I thank Deputy St Pier for giving way. Will he accept that there is a fundamental difference that within five years' return to review a seven-year funding arrangement is from now, which with his is going to be a rolling five years, so if it is looked at in three or four years' time, it will be for eight or nine years' time that any change could be made.

705 **Deputy St Pier:** Sir, I would agree with that and I was about to make the point that I think Members really need to determine whether they believe that that sort of arrangement is ultimately in the best interests of the whole education system, to have a level of certainty there rather than experiencing, as we have done now on at least the last two occasions, having the bun fight of the cliff edge approaching, which is exactly why we are in this debate today, so close to the end of this  
710 term, because it has not been possible to reach the agreement. I will give way to Deputy Soulsby.

**Deputy Soulsby:** I thank Deputy St Pier for giving way. Does he agree with me that this is not unprecedented in the States? We have similar agreements where we have major contracts such as  
715 with the secondary healthcare.

**Deputy St Pier:** Indeed, that was the very next point I was going to make and actually refer that example of the contract with the medical specialist group to Deputy Taylor, because it is exactly that arrangement. Indeed that the existence of that arrangement was an inspiration for me in terms  
720 of the thought about how to structure and draft this amendment.

So I would certainly urge Deputy Roffey and Deputy Bury, and indeed others, to certainly vote for this amendment even though they wish to then go on and vote for Deputy Roffey's amendment on the basis that this is better than the original Propositions and if they can summon the numbers to, if you like, trump this amendment with a subsequent amendment, well then that is clearly their  
725 aspiration, but I think it would be a shame to not vote for this amendment, be left with the original Propositions and we will be in a worse position than not. I would certainly encourage Members who wish to support subsequent amendments to at least support this amendment en route.

Deputy de Sausmarez raised some questions of His Majesty's Procureur and no doubt if there is still any ambiguity on that, His Majesty's Procureur will comment on that. A number of Members,  
730 Deputy Cameron, Deputy Murray, Deputy Haskins, have, of course, made the point very well and articulately that there is the need for further funding elsewhere within the education service. I would simply contend that it is not, cannot and should not be mutually exclusive. The needs there that do

exist will need to be addressed, but they should not necessarily be addressed through this particular mechanism.

735 I would also agree with Deputy Murray, who spoke of the need for this to be an evolution. This is part of an evolutionary journey. Like Deputy Bury, I myself have been on a journey in relation to this issue. Some Members who have been here since 2012 will certainly have heard me speak against the existence of the general grant and, indeed, I think Deputy Ferbrache also did so at a time in the past in relation to the implications of the removal of selection.

740 I think many of us in this Assembly have ended up in a different place from where we might have originally expected to be given events. But that really returns to my opening speech, which is to emphasise that this is a practical response to where we are, rather than necessarily where some of us would wish to be. I suspect where some of us wish to be is quite clearly there is a spectrum and that to some extent segues back into Deputy Trott's speech, that actually the reality is that there  
745 will be Members, if this amendment succeeds and becomes the final resolution, who feel slightly dissatisfied that they have not got one or other end of that spectrum, and that may well be the classic Guernsey compromise as a result of our system of Government.

I think that is a fairly good analysis and there are few in this Assembly more experienced than Deputy Trott to be able to make that analysis. I do not think there are any other matters to respond  
750 to but I do hope that as many Members as possible will support this amendment and allow us to move on.

Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Madam Procureur, is there anything you wish to advise Members?

755

**The Procureur:** Sir, no, not substantively. I think Deputy St Pier has covered the main issues. This is a resolution of the States. Any further agreement would need to be made with the colleges and the Committee on behalf of the States of Guernsey. If there were consequences in changing that agreement by a subsequent resolution of the States, that would have to be worked out in the  
760 agreement. It might have to be that compensation or due notice is given to the colleges, but there is nothing to add. This is just a resolution, but there may well be a subsequent agreement, the consequences of which would have to be thought about in due course.

Thank you, sir.

765 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Dudley-Owen.

**Deputy Dudley-Owen:** Sir, thank you.

I wanted to ask His Majesty's Procureur, in light of Deputy St Pier's comments, just to really clarify, it is a non-legally binding resolution of this States, which then becomes a legally binding  
770 contract?

**The Procureur:** Well, that all depends on how the agreement manifests. The resolution of the States, as is regularly advised, is not legally binding as such on the States. It is purely a resolution of the States, so a subsequent States meeting could change that resolution, but there may be legal  
775 consequences to that, depending on what has been agreed as part of the original resolution. Does that assist? Is that helpful?

**The Bailiff:** Members of the States, it is now time to vote on Amendment 1, proposed by Deputy St Pier, seconded by Deputy Ferbrache, and I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on  
780 Amendment 1, please.

785 *There was a recorded vote.*

*Amendment 1.*

*Carried – Pour 28, Contre 11, Ne vote pas 0, Did not vote 0, Absent 1*

<b>POUR</b>	<b>CONTRE</b>	<b>NE VOTE PAS</b>	<b>DID NOT VOTE</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>
Blin, Chris	Aldwell, Sue	None	None	Inder, Neil
Burford, Yvonne	Brouard, Al			
De Lisle, David	Bury, Tina			
De Sausmarez, Lindsay	Cameron, Andy			
Dyke, John	Dudley-Owen, Andrea			
Fairclough, Simon	Gabriel, Adrian			
Falla, Steve	Haskins, Sam			
Ferbrache, Peter	Le Tissier, Chris			
Gollop, John	Leadbeater, Marc			
Helyar, Mark	Roffey, Peter			
Hill, Edward	Taylor, Andrew			
Kazantseva-Miller, Sasha				
Le Tocq, Jonathan				
Mahoney, David				
Matthews, Aidan				
McKenna, Liam				
Meerveld, Carl				
Moakes, Nick				
Murray, Bob				
Oliver, Victoria				
Parkinson, Charles				
Prow, Robert				
Queripel, Lester				
Snowdon, Alexander				
Soulsby, Heidi				
St Pier, Gavin				
Trott, Lyndon				
Vermeulen, Simon				

790

**The Bailiff:** So in respect of Amendment 1 proposed by Deputy St Pier, seconded by Deputy Ferbrache, they voted in favour 28 Members, 11 Members voted against, no Member abstained, there is 1 Member absent at the vote, and therefore I would declare Amendment 1 carried, which means that the original Propositions 1 and 2 have now been replaced.

795 Deputy Roffey is it your wish to move Amendment number 2?

**Deputy Roffey:** It is, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Well in that case I will invite you to do that now, please.

800

[Amendment 2.](#)

*To delete propositions 1 and 2 and substitute therefor:*

*"1. To agree the following in its entirety:*

- to reduce the financial support paid by the States of Guernsey to Blanchelande College, Elizabeth College and The Ladies' College ("the Colleges") over the seven academic years from 2026/2027 to 2032/2033 inclusive by 4% annually, whilst adjusting for RPIX, as set out in the table in the explanatory note, such that in 2032/33 the total amount payable will be equivalent to 75.1% of the grant at the end of the current agreement in real terms; and*
- that the grant shall be based on the number of pupils multiplied by the per pupil funding figure in the table in the explanatory note, with a maximum funding equivalent in any given academic year of 1,256 pupils; and*
- that the resultant financial support to the Colleges is distributed to the Colleges in each such academic year based either on the number of qualifying students in Years 7 to 13 in each College*

*(as described in paragraph 17.3 of the Policy Letter) or on such basis as is otherwise unanimously agreed by the Colleges and reported in advance of the payment period to the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture, for the purpose of delivering education for students in Years 7 to 13; and*

- *to reinvest in the fully States-maintained education system one half of the resultant revenue savings subject to a case being made to the Policy & Resources Committee by the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture, with the remaining revenue savings contributing to Reducing the Cost of Public Services, in accordance with Resolution 28 of the States of Deliberation in respect of the States of Guernsey Annual Budget for 20251; and*
- *to direct the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture to return to the States with proposals for a new funding arrangement for the academic years 2033/34 onwards, within five years of the commencement of the arrangements described above. Such proposals should have particular regard to progress with the suggested partnership arrangement between the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture and the Colleges, so that the value of cooperation and joint working can be properly recognised and financially rewarded."*

**Deputy Roffey:** Thank you.

This amendment is an unashamed attempt to find some middle ground between the two pretty extreme Propositions that were contained in the original policy letter. In fact, it is more than that. It is an attempt to find common ground between my original compromise proposal, which I circulated to Members, which was to reduce the real level of the grant to 50% over seven years, and the pushback that I received on that. It is yet a further compromise. Because the two original proposals were fairly extreme. ESE's preferred option, Proposition 1, was that all state subsidies for private education should be removed after five years.

Personally, like Deputy Bury, I think this is a perfectly logical argument for such a black and white approach. I think it can be said that families have a complete and utter right to opt out of States' educational provision and pay for private education instead. And that by doing so, they patently are saving the taxpayers some money, because the States' provision can then be smaller than it would have been otherwise, but that is their own choice and that they should therefore finance that choice.

After all, exactly the same arguments could be said for those who choose private, secondary or tertiary healthcare. It saves the taxpayer money, but private healthcare does not enjoy any sort of state subsidy. It can also be said, and ESE do indeed say this, that even without any state subsidy, far more is spent on pupils in private education per capita than in the state sector. I do not have a problem with that. I think it is just a fact of life. Wealthy people can buy advantage in healthcare and education and in everything else. But it is still a fact.

Once you put on top of that a hefty subsidy for pupil from the taxpayer, one which is currently far higher than it traditionally has been, you do exacerbate that inequality. An inequality of which the majority of Island children are always going to be on the wrong side of, simply because the vast majority of Island families cannot afford private education. So that is one extreme stance and, to be honest, it is a set of arguments I may well have supported if I was fully convinced that our private school sector, which I believe is important, could continue to thrive with zero state subsidy.

But, sir, I am not currently 100% convinced of that. I think it is quite possible that they could do so. I am certainly not convinced that it is not the case. But I think it is far from a given, and therefore I think we need to tread very carefully.

At the other extreme, you have, or had rather – it is gone now – Proposition 2 as supported by the colleges. To my mind, this would also be completely unacceptable for a couple of reasons.

Firstly, as I explained in relation to the Deputy St Pier amendment, it bakes in a level of subsidy which is circa three times as high as it was just a few years ago. Now, I made this point yesterday, but I think I need to reiterate it because I think it has been missed by some. At the colleges' presentation, we heard an absurd argument that the States' grant has been reducing over recent years, and I have heard it again this morning. That patently is not true.

Rather, we deliberately increased it, and increased it massively, to address the colleges' fears of what might happen to their business models once we were no longer buying special places. What is true is that the total amount that the States pay to the colleges has tapered. But that has got nothing to do with a diminishing grant, rather it is to do with the States no longer buying special places. In that situation the States was effectively stepping in and paying the school fees instead of the family. That is completely different to providing grants to top up school fees, and the two should never be conflated as was being done at that presentation. Because the big difference is that the colleges could not charge any fees on top of what they received for what the States paid for special places. Whereas in respect to the general grant, which the States pay for fee-paying pupils, the colleges receive both the fees and the subsidy, a totally different Proposition.

So, we have indeed massively increased the grant, the States' subsidy for fee-paying pupils in recent years. Why did we do that? We did it because of the fears expressed by the colleges that once special places were discontinued they would not be able to fill those lost places with fee-paying pupils. So we agreed to a bridging arrangement, and it clearly was that, of higher subsidies to address that uncertainty about whether their business models could adapt and survive.

In reality they did and the colleges do educate roughly the same percentage of Island secondary pupils as they did when the States used to pay the fees for special placeholders. That is one reason why I think the original Proposition 2 was unacceptable.

The other one has been addressed. The other one has been addressed by the St Pier amendment, and that was that it baked in a real value of the whole grant, despite the fact that we are likely to see a diminishing number of pupils.

So now the transition away from special placeholders has been completed, I believe, and I may well be in a minority here, we should be looking to slowly return to more normal levels of subsidy for fee payers at the colleges. Going very cautiously at first, of course, not to risk ruining the model, because the model is important, but at least making some savings to invest in improving our States' provision, which is the only option for the majority of Guernsey children.

Now I may, indeed I do, profoundly disagree with the ESE over both the educational and financial benefits of the secondary school model that they persuaded this Assembly to endorse, but I 100% agree with them that we need to invest in that provision. With severely limited public revenues, the more we subsidise private education, the less we can afford to invest in our States' sector. That is patently the case. But some will say, and they have said, what if any reduction in that subsidy causes some sort of mass migration from the private to the public sector? Could that happen?

Well, let us leave aside the fact that that particular wolf has been cried repeatedly every time college funding has been discussed over the decades, but has never occurred. The reality is that the gentle real-terms reduction that Deputy Burford and I are proposing in this amendment could not possibly prompt such a stampede. While what is being proposed is a 4% per annum reduction in the grant per pupil over the next seven years, two things need to be borne in mind. The first is that it is a real-terms reduction, after increasing the grant by inflation every year. So the cash reduction will actually be a lot less than 4%. It could even be an increase if inflation is above 4%. I hope that is not the case.

Secondly, and more importantly, it will not result in a 4% increase in fees being paid by families, or anything remotely like it. Because the bit being reduced by 4% in real terms is just the subsidy, which is far less than the fees themselves. So the fees roughly are £15,000 a year and the subsidy on top of that is £2,000. It is the £2,000 that has been reduced by 4% per year, so the actual impact on the whole £17,000 is very small indeed. How small? Just above £80 a year is actually going to be the impact.

This clearly will not prompt a massive behavioural shift and the size of the real-term subsidy per pupil will still be more in real terms at the end of the seven years than it traditionally has been. This is a very careful amendment which feels our way back slowly towards the historical norm in relation to the levels of taxpayer subsidy for private education in Guernsey. But, crucially, taken as a whole, it will allow a modest but an important amount of money to be invested in States' educational

provision where the big majority of our children are educated and where the sum spent on them, each of them, is far lower than in the private sector.

Now, of course, I have to accept that any reduction in grant might make a difference to fees, if it is all passed on by the colleges. Certainly an £80 a year increase, there is no way I think families will be taking their children out. It might make a borderline difference to the number of families who elect in the future to go for private education. But that is always going to be the case.

If we remove the grant altogether, then presumably the fees would go to circa £17,000. That would exclude another small tranche of middle-income people. If we increase the grants to say £5,000 a year instead of £2,000 a year, then the £15,000 could go down to £12,000 and more families will be able to afford it. Wherever you pitch it, there is going to be some people who cannot afford public education, but they are not being cast into outer darkness. I hope we all believe that you can get a first-class academic inspirational education inside our state sector, because if you do not then we are trying to fix the wrong problem today. We want to make sure that people do not have to buy out, do not have to somehow escape from the state sector in order to get a good education. I would make some suggestions how our state sector goes to make that even better, but that is another matter.

However, sir, I think there is one elephant in the room, which I think needs to be addressed and which this amendment seeks to address. As I have said earlier, the large drop in total pupil numbers, which we absolutely know is coming very soon, will have a profound impact on both the private and state schools. In the state sector, I think it will graphically show how foolish we were to U-turn on the prospect of a 2-11-18 school system, but that is not today's consideration.

In relation to the private sector, assuming the buyout rate remains the same, the only way all three colleges can remain viable would be by far closer co-operation and collaboration both between themselves and the state sector. Now I have listened to the college leaders stressing how willing they are to explore this and I hope and expect ESC will embrace the concept just as warmly. This amendment makes very clear that in future the level of taxpayer support for the colleges should recognise and reward such co-working and collaboration. I cannot stress enough how important that is going to be. Economies of scale are going to be rapidly disappearing.

Personally, I rather doubt that even with shared provision, six secondary schools in Guernsey are going to make sense in five or 10 years' time. But if there is going to be any prospect of them all not only surviving but being cost-effective, then it is critical that shared provision becomes a reality and every possible synergy is exploited to the full. Life tells me the best chance of actually achieving such beneficial change to what is, let us face it, some fairly ingrained practices, is to put a financial value on that change, and that is what this amendment does. It spells out that there will be financial reward for co-working.

In summary, the current level of taxpayer subsidy for private pupils in the colleges is much, much higher than it was just a few years ago. That hike was always meant as a temporary bridge, while the impact on the numbers attending the colleges, of withdrawing the special places became clear. It now has become clear, and it has not had any impact, and it is time to start the journey gently and carefully back towards normality, and in doing so, allow us to invest as we should in the state sector, where circa 70% of our children are educated.

Finally, can I just add my voice to those who say that I hope that this debate and what is remaining of it does not become a battle between the virtues of public and private education. Both have their strengths and both are an important part of the total provision. I am a huge supporter of the state sector. It is where I was educated, it is where my three stepchildren were educated, it is where my three grandchildren are now. To me, it is just a normal route of education, but I absolutely respect and admire much that the private colleges do, so you will hear no negativity from me in respect of private educational provision, and I hope it is reciprocated.

I was, together with others, both shocked and frankly insulted when an email to colleagues – one Deputy posed the question, if it was not for the colleges, where would our next generation of leaders come from? As if the concept of inspirational and successful leaders being a product of state education was so unthinkable that it had not even occurred to him.



In reality – I give way, as long as the clock stops for when I give way, to Deputy St Pier.

**Deputy St Pier:** I thank Deputy Roffey for giving way. Deputy Roffey, obviously, an ex-Grammar School pupil, which we no longer have in the Island. I think the comment he is trying to pin relates to something I said to all Deputies, two weekends ago, which was had an economic sensitivity report been done on these proposals, it was Deputy Inder's amendment, and where were we going to get our leaders from in the future.

I purposely did not reply to Deputy Roffey on that because it would come up in debate and here we are. We get many of our leaders from the colleges. We get many of our leaders from ESC schools. We also get many of our leaders imported into the Island. I think that is the point that was lost on Deputy Roffey, that it is important we produce more leaders in-house, on Island, not just through the colleges but through our own education, not less leaders. That was my fear, if those proposals would have gone through, that we would have produced less leaders.

**Deputy Roffey:** The point was not lost on me at all. My point was that those leaders are just as likely to come through either from families who can afford to pay for private education or from those who cannot and come through the state sector. I think to suggest otherwise is dubious.

In reality, sir, we need balance in our educational policy. Yes, we absolutely need a thriving private offering. I completely agree with that. But we also need to maximise investment in the state sector where the large majority of Guernsey children will always be educated. I believe that this amendment strikes that balance well and carefully, and I recommend it to the States.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Burford, do you formally second Amendment 2?

**Deputy Burford:** I do, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Thank you very much. Deputy Gollop.

**Deputy Gollop:** Thank you.

If this amendment passes I will not be displeased because it certainly is a compromise and it is certainly true that Deputy Roffey has moved quite a long way in putting forward this particular version, and I thought we had very good speeches this morning from various people but especially, as is often the case, Deputy Bury and indeed Deputy Haskins.

That said, I do not think I will be voting for this amendment because I have already voted for my favourite of the three, which was the predecessor, led by Deputy St Pier and Deputy Ferbrache. Although I like elements of the Deputy Roffey/Deputy Burford amendment, such as rewarding the colleges for partnership and encouraging a continuation with a review, it still comes down to the messaging.

The messaging here, and I suspect in the other amendment, if we get to it, is that there is at some point a review and a cut-off, whereas the rolling programme or Proposition 2, where I was closer to from the start, really indicates, for the moment anyway, a semi-permanent relationship. Whereas this really has two elements, unless I have misinterpreted – Deputy Roffey can elucidate – that the money would come to an end unless the States decreed otherwise and, in any case, it is gradually reducing.

I think a theme in this, and maybe the next, amendment is about encouraging the colleges to stand on their own two feet. I did not do a particularly good speech yesterday. I know some of the Members have perhaps clawed into strong speeches on their side, Deputy Cameron, Deputy Moakes and others, but I kind of wanted to not sit on the fence but to be more nuanced. But I actually think we have to be in a more open and honest and transparent mood than we have been.

I was pleasantly surprised, actually, to hear the wise words, I think, of Deputy Helyar and Deputy Murray yesterday, and Deputy Haskins this morning, because sometimes I am accused,

especially in P&R, of being irresponsible, because I am like Sir Bruce Forsyth saying, 'More, more, more'. But the reality is the narrative of us cutting expenditure in many areas is not realistic. I have  
995 been a champion, I am afraid, in some areas, not for an efficient Government, but for bigger Governments and more intervention. I am surprised actually to hear maybe my views are catching on finally at this 11th hour, because I think we do run the risk of going down rabbit holes if we are constantly looking for efficiency cuts.

Yes, we do need fundamental spending reviews. You always need reviews. As a personal thing,  
1000 I know we do tend to spend too much on projects, building costs, IT, but that goes on and on. Here today I have to put my cards on the table and although, like Deputy Bury, I am extremely keen on more resources to help underprivileged younger people, bringing about more equality, more support for those who have additional learning needs, for the home-schoolers, and even for homeschool, which I think is almost a hybrid perhaps of the school facilities, shall we say. But that  
1005 has to be in the context of where we are.

We have certainly had some very powerful letters from educationists but they are singing from a different hymn sheet than the majority of correspondents we have, and perhaps in some ways our Island endemic culture and where we are, because where we are is we have got at least a quarter, almost a third, of people in the independent private sector, unlike say Scotland or England or  
1010 wherever. Deputy Haskins's point about us needing more resources generally I would agree with. Poor education, and Deputy Roffey is right, there are things we could do to improve the already, I hope, excellent education we offer in the state sector, although I think that could be enhanced.

Some of the letters we have had from educationalists do not say we need a bigger budget. They take a very clear line that we should not be supporting the independent private sector at all. So they  
1015 go further than anything Deputy Roffey or Deputy Burford or other Deputies will say. They basically do not believe we should because to them we are taking money from Peter to pay Paul, perhaps, but we are also, in a finite budget, losing the opportunity to support the more advantaged.

There certainly is a hint, and I will not go into this too much, but it is certainly there, that in not discouraging pupils to go to the independent schools who are perhaps on the margins of viability  
1020 in terms of what the parents can afford, we are reducing the quantum of able pupils in the secondary schools that would add ballast in terms of their abilities to what is a comprehensive model.

There is definitely an intellectual argument there that does not support compromise, that supports one way or the other. My problem is, deep down, I want to give the colleges as much as possible, both the parents and the funders, because – I think I don't – I support choice and strangely  
1025 enough some of the letters we have had say they support choice and then in the next paragraph point out that actually we would be better off if we had a reduced number of people in the independent sector because that would strengthen the state sector.

Actually, the letters we have had from both sides that say they support choice are misleading in one respect because not everybody has that choice, as Deputy Cameron and Deputy Bury said,  
1030 because clearly those who are wealthiest have that choice. Those who are in the middle may or may not, depending on our deliberations. Those who are in the lower quintiles do not have that choice.

My philosophy is we actually need a broader debate – that may come up in another amendment – about the choice and about what we want to offer. I think one of the mistakes we made when we went down the 11-plus, maybe the two-school model had advantages, although I think, like the  
1035 college proposals before us today, they were unacceptable to the vast majority of the public.

On the other hand, I think an 11 to 18 school option was something that was good and maybe should be pursued for the state sector. We need variety, we need choice, we need a partnership that really works for all. To that extent, I think we are almost in the wrong debate, but this debate has thrown up some interesting ideas. Not only have some Members moved clearly to the fact that  
1040 we need more revenue, but I think what we found out is not only the partnership ideas, but the perspective that Jersey is giving a better offer in terms of access to their semi-independent sector through a more generous system.

I think it is up to the next States to consider these matters quite deeply about the best hybrid model of education and maximising choice and diversity for people of all incomes. As we also know,

the colleges for one reason or another do seem to have buy-in from people whose young people are considered to have additional learning needs.

Deputy Dudley-Owen made a good point, of course, that those needs were not so apparent 20 years ago. At the same time, people like me had those needs. They just were not identified. We were just a bit naughty or I stayed away from school. So those are issues.

Where am I with this? I would say that, bearing in mind – the Deputy St Pier/Deputy Ferbrache amendment that we passed to make the Propositions is the most generous, but also I think the most acceptable to the majority of correspondents and gives us greater flexibility and enables us to look afresh at how we can improve the whole education system, not just what ESC runs but also the other colleges. We actually need to consider what really would work best for Guernsey. Therefore I would prefer those Propositions to stay in place rather than place some of these which would bring perhaps a degree of suggestion that what we are doing is ultimately temporary.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Trott.

**Deputy Trott:** Thank you, sir.

You have reminded me, for which I am grateful, that I am able to speak for greater than 15 minutes; I shall speak for less than two, Members will be pleased to hear.

Now, there are some in our community who do not have choice. I think that is regrettable. But the answer cannot be to reduce even more families' choice as a result. The answer should be to maintain greater choice for many and greater choice for more. Choice is not a dirty word. It should be a fundamental principle of the manner, the way in which we approach debates of this nature.

Now, I have some information here, which I think is relevant. I think there are some who regard the independent schools as expensive. But a statistic that I am aware of is that the colleges already operate on an incredibly tight margin with fees in similar cost-of-living areas in the UK ranging between 22,000 and 28,000. We know how many families of students in these schools are in the lower three quintiles. We know that. We know that because that evidence is available to us. In fact, it is evidence that the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture helped provide.

As Deputy Bury said earlier, these are not toffs, these are not wealthy people, these are hard-working families, many of whom, of course, work within our financial services industry. Why is that relevant? Well, I will come to that in a moment. Others have made reference to this, but it is really important, and I am going to say it again, choice is not a dirty word.

Now we live in a cocoon in this Assembly. There is no question of that and our email correspondence has helped change opinions. Deputy Bury's was not quite persuaded on the earlier amendment, but certainly a very significant number of Members of this Assembly were persuaded by these and other arguments. Now we all believe in this Assembly that you can get a good quality education in our state sector. I talked earlier when I spoke of my elder daughter who went to the Grammar School and then on to university where she achieved a first class honours degree. She was the first in generations of families of Trotts that made it to university and we were all immensely proud, but she is a product – an absolute product – of the state system. We do not have that system anymore. She could not benefit today from a grammar school education. It is a great shame. It is a view I have maintained throughout my time in this Assembly.

But we must also really recognise the advice given to us by those who generate the majority of the prosperity in our community, and I do not intend or attempt to sound elitist, but it is a fact that people like the Guernsey International Business Association and the Institute of Directors, they are the wealth creators, very much so. Again, I am going to say, choice is not a dirty word, it should be a fundamental principle.

Now the reality is that this amendment, the Roffey amendment, will not produce any savings. It will not produce any savings, but it runs the risk of destabilising the private educational sector. Why would you do that? You would not do it in business. Why would we do it? We would only do that if we live in some sort of cocoon that fails to recognise the realities of Island life. Maintain choice. Choice is not a dirty word.

**Deputy Kazantseva-Miller:** Thank you, sir.

1100 First of all, I wanted to declare an interest, but I was also wondering if actually everyone should declare an interest as taxpayers who should be considering the benefits of all the children in our community in how taxpayer funding is apportioned. So I declare interest from those two perspectives.

1105 In relation to Amendment 2, I think there are at least three fundamental flaws with this amendment, which to me makes it much worse than the amended Propositions, according to Deputy St Pier and Deputy Ferbrache amendments.

1110 The first point to pick on is actually bullet point 2, that the proposal is that the grant is capped to a certain number of pupils, which is 1,256. What it is basically suggesting is that while we value the private system, we could not possibly let it grow further than the current 30% distribution. What it also means is that this potentially creates real logistical challenges of how potential fees per pupil or the subsidy per pupil could be calculated between the colleges. It also means that potentially if some of the colleges are doing well and increasing their numbers and some are doing not so well, but if overall the number of pupils goes above that cap, the colleges that might be performing well might get penalised because they actually have been growing their business increasing numbers, but they would not be getting increased per pupil costs.

1115 I think there are real challenges in terms of what is being proposed with the second bullet point in terms of capping the total number of pupils under which effectively the grant will be. So it does not become really a per-pupil grant because there is a cap being provided.

1120 The second point, which is probably absolutely the key point, is that the whole sentiment of this amendment is about proposing a reduction of 25%. Well, why 25%? Why not 30% or 40%, 10% or maybe zero? It is a completely arbitrary number picked out and presented as better than the halfway house. But what it does send, it sends the strongest signal that while we value the colleges, that we do not really quite value them so much. Let us continue reducing the funding that they have been receiving. The funding has been reduced by 50% over this current term, but let us continue reducing it further. Once the trend is set, the trend will continue going one way only. The reduction will continue. This sends absolutely the wrong message and this is the perfect example of managed decline.

1125 The third point, which was addressed by Deputy Trott. is in relation that this amendment proposes savings. I think it is a complete fallacy and also in terms of the actual volume of what this amendment says will be achieved, will not touch the sides of what needs to be done to really reinvest in States' education.

1130 We have received a really extraordinary number of emails and all, pretty much without exception, well-articulated and long emails. To me, what actually came strongly is a real sense of unfairness. I do not give way. A real sense of unfairness and concern by many of the parents who wrote to us. There were so many emails from families who consider themselves the middle Guernsey and the squeezed middle. While the statistics may indicate that on average those households may have higher equivalent household incomes, as we call them, those households do not feel like they are those wealthy households. Because when you take the £15,000 or £30,000 out of their disposable income, it really squeezes what you have got available.

1140 When we look at equivalent income, this is income generated through working. We are talking about working parents, working families who are paying for their children. A £15,000 fee represents about 21% of the household's disposable income, where you have two working parents earning about £90,000 together, 21% of disposable income. Only housing would represent a bigger average spend of 30%. So if you have two children you decide to put through education, that represents 42% of your disposable income.

1145 Do we really think that most of the parents want to pay so much money out of their disposable income? Do they think that if they had the choice, they would make it? No. Many parents make that very hard choice because of the very unfortunate turmoil that the state system has been in over the

last 10, 20 years. It is very unfortunate. There are many reasons why it has happened. But this is at the core of why these parents, so many parents, choose to make that very difficult financial decision.

1150 In addition, they make that financial decision because they want better provision for children, especially with SEND or additional learning requirements, and they do it because they are concerned about the class sizes in the state schools and they are concerned about the general sizes of the schools. What we have also witnessed over the last, especially four or five years of COVID, is the cost of living. We have had, similar to other countries in the world, massively deteriorating cost of living situation that is really pushing many families across the whole household spectrum to the edge. So finding another £2,000 of disposable income per child under the sofa is not as easy as Deputy Cameron suggests by cutting a manicure, a coffee or a glass of wine.

1155 The sense of unfairness as hard-working Guernsey families – because we have got a much broader attendance of families here than in the UK and this is unfair as they feel –

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**Deputy Burford:** Point of correction.

**The Bailiff:** Point of correction, Deputy Burford.

1165 **Deputy Burford:** Could I just ask if Deputy Kazantseva-Miller is speaking in general debate because she is referring to finding an extra £2,000 per annum per child and that does not relate to this amendment in any way.

1170 **The Bailiff:** Yes, it is important Deputy Kazantseva-Miller to concentrate on what the Proposition that would replace the current Proposition 1 does. If you want to expand further than this amendment then there will be an opportunity to speak in general debate but if you want to forego your rights to speak in general debate by speaking now you can.

**Deputy Kazantseva-Miller:** Thank you, sir.

1175 I may breach into general debate at which point, if I do that, I will forego my right to speak in general debate.

1180 I think that this unfairness is because those families, it is statistically correct to say, will be proportionately paying more tax while effectively getting very little in return from public services. This was very obvious from the presentation presented to us by the Fiscal Policy Panel that shows the distribution of income generation and expenditure for the demographic groups with not surprisingly the largest amount of tax and social security contributions being in the working-age population, but especially concentrated in the 45 to 55 age group while the largest expenditure is in the 65-plus demographics, but also an important proportion that we spend on education.

1185 But obviously those families do not get access to that education expenditure. They do not get that education expenditure through a tax relief. For what is effectively an 11% grant of the total fee, the States is able to crowdfund 89% of that investment through private funding. So they feel that they are paying their taxes while getting very little benefit from the public expenditure. Under this scenario, there will be a reduction from the original removal of the £2,000.

1190 So just to illustrate how much tax is actually paid by a household of a combined income of £90,000 of two working parents, they would be paying £18,000 of tax and social security contributions. That would mean they would be paying about £3,800 of tax and social security just to be able to pay the £15,000 fee of disposable income. So the subsidy per pupil, which is currently £2,000, is more than covered fully by the tax that is just paid on top of that subsidy by the working family.

1195 There has been much talk about the social contracts and how the social contracts in our community are really being tested. I do feel this is actually one of the areas which may not feel intuitive, but I think the social contracts with those families who are hardworking families, working very hard, paying the proportionally larger portion of taxes are not getting the benefits from public funding.

Now this leads me to the bigger debate about the cost, cost per pupil. I appreciate there has been representations made and I do not doubt the statistics that have been provided to us by officers. But it is very clear that those calculations cannot be compared as apples for oranges because it is very clear that certain costs have been excluded from the calculations. We have talked about the capital costs and financing costs, and while I appreciate what has been said is that if they were included it will be marginal, but perhaps the lack of inclusion of capital costs really speaks to the lack of investment we have undertaken into the education estate and TGI and investments. The long overdue investment into the college is just an example of that.

The second point is that the current calculations do not include a significant portion of central educational costs such as Sexual Health and Relationship Education (SHARE), Careers Guernsey, Guernsey Music Service, educational psychology, communication, autism, and so on. The President mentioned that the colleges were wrong to quote that 3% of the total Education budget delivers the education for 30% of the children. She mentioned that the equivalent secondary budget under Education is only £21 million, but it really raises the question: where are the rest of the £72 million being spent if only £21 million is directly attributable to secondary education? So I think it is really not possible to look at the statistics that have been provided to us in terms of the cost per pupil ratio and suggest that there will be no costs in migrating students out of the private sector.

So if we have a really strong educational system, including especially in the colleges, which is only costing to the taxpayer tiny amounts of money while being a very attractive Proposition against especially Jersey and for working families to come and relocate, including key workers, so instead we are proposing a continuous cut of the funding arrangements. While the Proposition is for smaller cuts that were envisioned by the regional Propositions, it is not giving the continuity and the planning that is necessary for the colleges to move ahead. It is also assuming these linear reductions, assuming that the costs of the colleges could be potentially reduced or adjusted or their business models could be adjusted in a linear fashion. But that really indicates the lack of understanding of how the cost base of this institution works because slight reductions could lead to structural decline. It could mean that they can no longer afford a certain provision, which may mean they can no longer afford to have certain additional classes. It leads to potential structural decline.

I think this is the key point to make also against Jersey. They have seven private schools with different degrees of subsidy and different States' ownership, with 50% of children educated in private colleges. Through this debate I think one of the elements we have unearthed is actually how attractive Jersey may actually be in relation to relocation. So if we were making a rational and risk-based decision, if we were to gamble with the sustainability of the colleges by continually saying, 'Well, yes, we value it but let us continue reducing the funding' we need a radically different view of education, not as expenditure but as investment. I know that Deputy Dudley-Owen and many others talk about education as investment, and very importantly Deputy Haskins mentioned we need to consider all children equally and we should not be considering some children at the expense of others. It is not a zero-sum game.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Kazantseva-Miller, your 15 minutes has expired, I am afraid. Deputy Burford.

**Deputy Burford:** Thank you, sir.

As the seconder on this amendment, I was going to wait to speak a little later in the debate but I really feel I must rise to try and put to bed some of the hares that – I think I am mixing my metaphors there, but some of the hares that Deputy Kazantseva-Miller has set running. So before I launch into my speech proper, I will just run through them.

The first one, which I think upset me the most really, is that Deputy Kazantseva-Miller suggested that anyone voting for this amendment does not value the pupils or indeed, by extension, their families at the colleges. I would actually quite like her to withdraw that remark, but I just think it is totally unfair. It is a leap. I value all children and all families in this Island equally. That is our role in this Assembly in any case and I just think it is –

**Deputy Kazantseva-Miller:** Point of correction.

**The Bailiff:** Point of correction, Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

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**Deputy Kazantseva-Miller:** Sir, I did not say that this amendment does not value the children or the families in the colleges.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Burford.

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**Deputy Burford:** Thank you, sir.

Well, I was listening to the speech, but in any case let us just have it on the record that I, as the seconder of this amendment, certainly do value all of the children and indeed the role of the colleges in this Island immensely. Indeed, I sent my son to one of the colleges, and going back I was a special placeholder back in 1971 at the old Blanchelande College.

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So in any case, the pupil cap. This is something I am a little bit concerned about because Deputy Kazantseva-Miller did spend some time going on about how wrong the pupil cap in this amendment was but she voted for Deputy St Pier's amendment, which although the wording might be slightly differently arranged does exactly the same thing. So she has already supported the principle of the pupil cap in that amendment.

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The last point before I move on was – I will give way to Deputy Roffey.

**Deputy Roffey:** Thank you, Deputy Burford.

1275

Will you accept that there is no pupil cap? There is a funding cap based on a formula with the current number of pupils. There will be nothing to stop an increase – it would be almost amazing given the demographics that we have coming down the road, but there would be nothing to stop more pupils going to the colleges. It is just that the formula for funding will be based at a maximum of the current number.

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**Deputy Burford:** Absolutely. Thank you, Deputy Roffey.

It is just that, but that is also common to these three compromise amendments, one which has been laid and passed, one which we are debating and one which is yet to come. They all acknowledge the falling pupil numbers expected in the secondary sector as we go forward and fix the funding to those numbers. So that is a commonality. The only option to not have that would have been to vote for the original Propositions, which are no longer in existence.

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The last point was about structural decline and sustainability of the colleges. I would ask people to listen to the numbers relating to this amendment that I am going to go through again in my speech and to consider whether they think the numbers being discussed will lead to structural decline and unsustainability because I think that is a reach. Because Deputy Kazantseva-Miller's speech, as I highlighted in my point of correction, did keep referring to the £2,000 that is currently in existence as though that £2,000 was going to change by £2,000 or be removed and it certainly is not anywhere near it under this amendment.

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I like numbers a lot, but I do realise that numbers when read out in a speech can very soon just become an unholy and sleep-inducing jumble. So I will be reiterating some of the figures that Deputy Roffey has set out, as it is crucial that Members know exactly the effect this will have on the colleges when compared to the other two options if they so wish to vote for it.

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As with the Inder and St Pier amendments, this is a pragmatic compromise. This amendment acknowledges the arguments made by the Committee and the colleges and pays some heed to the financial situation of the States. I supported the St Pier amendment and I will support this amendment as I want to find a way forward that gives certainty to everybody while not creating an unmanageable risk and while recognising my role to advocate for all of our community.

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So in blunt terms, if this amendment carries and if the colleges choose to pass on all of the grant reduction to parents, then in the first year parents will see their fees rise by £1.50 a week and similar

for subsequent years. In other words, looking at it another way, the £19.9 million that we would pay to the colleges over the next seven years if the current arrangement was rolled on would reduce to a figure of £17 million, so still the lion's share, still a significant grant subsidy. That is across the three colleges.

The political reality of the situation we find ourselves in is that the Committee for ESC's proposals were dead on arrival, in fact dead on publication in this particular Assembly. I do not see the President dissenting. Equally, the college proposal for a 14-year agreement with no mind to pupil numbers was a reach too far in an uncertain world with falling school rolls, so there was a gaping lacuna that has been filled by these three compromise amendments.

A compromise it may be, but this amendment is not a halfway house where funding the colleges is concerned. It is very much better than that. In seven years' time under this amendment the colleges will have still received over the period six-sevenths or 85% of what they would have received if the current arrangement continued. I think on this matter we should really cut ESC a bit of slack. ESC have done as they were directed by the States when it was previously agreed to keep funding the colleges for special placeholders, even when they no longer existed, to insulate them against the risk of not finding replacement students, a risk that has not materialised.

But where I will not cut the Committee any slack is that despite knowing funding for the state sector is tight, they shelved the primary review when we have significant and, therefore, expensive overcapacity in that sector and when they shelved the review part of the pause and review that the President had championed to instead bring forward a capital and revenue expensive, four-building secondary model that also removed 11 to 18 schooling in the state sector, leaving the colleges as the only provider.

This amendment also allows for index linking. Unlike attempting to reduce the grants by not index linking it as a future amendment that may be laid will propose, this amendment gives solid certainty and does not leave the colleges at the mercy of unexpected years with high inflation. Deputy Murray was right in his speech. We need to invest more in our children in the state sector. This amendment will feed back the equivalent of just £200,000 a year to those children. It will not be anywhere near enough on its own but it is a start.

Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Meerveld.

**Deputy Meerveld:** Thank you, sir.

While I deeply appreciate this amendment being brought forward, especially by Deputy Roffey who has tried to find a compromise position, like Deputy Gollop I will not be supporting this amendment because I prefer the one that has always been voted through, which is the amendment proposed by Deputy St Pier and Deputy Ferbrache.

Thank you, sir.

**A Member:** Hear, hear.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Dyke.

**Deputy Dyke:** Thank you, sir.

My concern with this amendment, and I thank Deputy Roffey for taking the trouble, is I am not really seeing the point of it. If one takes the view that we want to continue to support the colleges for all the reasons we have discussed – I do not need to go into them here. Deputy Trott made some additional points just now which I think were very valid, but assuming that is the sense of the Assembly and that is what we want to do, I do not think there is very much point in adding this sort of slow salami slicing of the grant for a very marginal possible improvement in the budget of £200,000 if that is what it does.



1355 What my concern is, which I do believe is rather a negative, it does send out a rather hostile  
message to the community as to our approach to the colleges, which is an impression I think it  
could well give. Looking at the overall situation of our jurisdiction, we need the business community  
in particular to see that we are positive and open for business, and to give the impression that in  
some way our colleges are under threat would be an extremely bad thing to do. (**A Member:** Hear,  
1360 hear.)

We no longer have the grammar school. Businesses on the Island look to the future. They look  
to where things are going. We should probably do a bit more of that. That is what they do. If they  
get a sense that there is some long-term threat to our colleges, thus a long-term threat to their  
powers of recruitment – because without the colleges we do not have a grammar school – they will  
1365 not be able to get high-flying executives to the Island. I have said this before. All the time we are  
competing with Jersey. All the time Jersey want to eat our lunch. We must be aware of that.

So in my view this is of marginal significance in a financial sense either way, but I think it is  
potentially somewhat damaging in the overall business sense. When Deputy Trott was giving us his  
figures tomorrow – I will be looking forward to seeing the actual paperwork, but when Deputy Trott  
1370 gave us his figures tomorrow – yesterday, I think one of them was that our income tax receipts in  
real terms are just about flat. That is actually quite a serious point. It means that we are not growing  
our economy. Everything we do now pretty much must be focused on growing the economy, and  
this is a minor negative. So I would respectfully suggest that this amendment is not a good idea  
and if we want to amend, the better amendment is Deputy St Pier's and Deputy Ferbrache's.

1375 Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Ferbrache.

**Deputy Ferbrache:** Sir, this amendment is brought with sincerity and has been well-presented  
1380 by Deputy Roffey and Deputy Burford; absolute sincerity. But my starting point really I think is the  
speech ably presented in about three minutes or so by Deputy Trott. Because he was making the  
point – and he is rightly very proud of his elder daughter and her achievements. She went to the  
Grammar School, then went to university and got a first-class honours degree, all as he said through  
the state system. Now, one of my daughters went to the Grammar School and all her education –  
1385 and previously at La Houquette School, so all her education was at the state school. She did not go  
on to university. She went on to agricultural college but the same kind of thing. We – figuratively  
I hasten to add before a host of social workers come in through the doors – twisted her arm to say  
she should go to Ladies' College because she was a bright girl. Nothing wrong with the education  
at the Grammar School, it is a truly excellent – well, was, sadly, in the past tense now, a truly excellent  
1390 school. But she said, 'No, my friends are there. I think it will suit me and I will enjoy my time there'  
and she did, the years she spent there.

So as Deputy Burford said, every single child is important – every single child – whichever school  
they are at, Les Voies, St Sampson's, Elizabeth College or whatever. Nobody is better than anybody  
else. I take Deputy Bury's point in her previous comments that although not everybody that goes  
1395 to the colleges is affluent, they are not poor in the sense that she ably described it. But there are  
that 30% quintile, so what, 30, three-tenths, a third of them where parents are struggling. Now, I am  
not going to pretend that £80 a year extra fees is going to tip the balance probably either to stop  
people putting their kids in those schools or taking them out. I do not think that is the case, but  
I think it is – and I do not mean a criticism when I use this phrase, I think this is a tinkering  
1400 amendment. I appreciate it was put forward independently of the St Pier/Ferbrache amendment  
but it is a tinkering amendment.

When we look at the figures, although I am somebody who has spent a lifetime arguing  
terminology and have got, as Deputy Trott would say, reasonably well-paid for doing that, but in  
relation to it, figures are figures. That is the figures I gave yesterday. You do not physically have to  
1405 look at it, but if you figuratively look at figure 1 on page 18 of the policy letter, as I said yesterday,  
over £4 million in grants. I know some of it was special placeholder funding, another was general

grant, but it is public money, £4 million public money. If I go to the butcher, he is not bothered about where I got the money from. I have to pay him. He does not know whether it came from this source or that source, whether I earned it or whether it was interest or whatever. So the States of Guernsey, the taxpayer of Guernsey, was paying for the education of 1,150 children in 2019-20 just over £4 million. I gave the precise figure yesterday. Under the 2025-26 estimate, there is another, what, 1,106 children going to the private schools. The figure has gone up from 1,150 to 1,256. The figure for the overall money that the States is going to pay is £2,844,940, so that is a drop of £1.2 million, £1.3 million. That is a drop. Those children deserve to be educated just as much as anybody else. As I said yesterday, the figures, whether it is £10,000 a year or £15,000 a year or somewhere in between, for the education of a child in the secondary school is irrelevant. This figure, the subsidy – because that is what it is, it is a subsidy to the private school – is much lower than that. Those parents are still paying their taxes.

Now, because the figure of 1,150 in 2019 included 286 placeholders and the figure, as I said yesterday, now of 2025-26, includes no placeholders but it has gone up by 1,100 children, in fact, as I said, the actual number that have transferred over the last four or five years from state education to private education has gone up by about 45% of the numbers of – because the placeholders have dropped out. I gave the precise figures yesterday. Now, I do not know but I would bet a dollar to a donut that a large reason for that is because the Grammar School has gone. People cannot now think, ‘My child is academically of a standard that he or she should go to the Grammar School’, so they have transferred across to the private education system. That is the way it is. Because those kids, because we are talking about secondary children, they would all have been in the education system several years ago. It is not as though they have suddenly – there might be some people coming in from outside the Island, but they generally have come into the position. Now we have had – Deputy Burford raised it – it would have been different if we had a two-school model rather than the whatever it was. Well, that is an aside, but overall and originally I thought that was a good idea but then I changed my mind and changed my vote in relation to that when it came through the States. Because overwhelmingly I listened to the public of Guernsey. They did not want what they perceived to be two big English-style comprehensives. They wanted it spread out more evenly in a different way. As I said yesterday, we are educating our kids for the people of Guernsey, not for Slough. We are a different community in so many ways.

So it will not bring the walls of Jericho tumbling down in relation to this if the Roffey amendment is passed, but I just think it is tinkering. I do not think it happens. As Deputy Helyar said, Deputy Haskins said and other people have said, what we are really doing is not spending enough money. We are not bringing enough money into the system. More money should be spent on new beginnings and all the other things that are highlighted in the – whatever it is called, which I was very impressed with when I went round there when I was electioneering, whatever it was. So all of that should come in, but the majority of the States did not want to increase any revenue. It was going to be all right, the money was going to blow in on the wind, we were going to find oil in Torteval. We were going to do all kinds of stuff, the money was going to be there. We did not need it. Deputy Soulsby said there is a middle way. Deputy St Pier said there is a middle way. No, there is not. The stark reality is we have run out of money, we have run out of runway, to use the metaphor that I have only heard Deputy Helyar say 246 times. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) We have run out of all that. We are in a position now where we have to make difficult decisions. Do not make it at the cost of our children.

**A Member:** Hear, hear.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Parkinson.

**Deputy Parkinson:** Thank you, sir.

Well, it has become customary to declare one’s interests in relation to the education debate at the outset and in a way I really do not have any. I was educated myself in the UK, as were my children

for most of their school careers. They did attend Melrose (Ladies' College) and Acorn House in their early years but that was now more than 20 years ago. Incidentally, I mention though my oldest daughter, who is now a civil servant in London, qualified as a teacher in the UK. She did do some locum teaching at St Sampson's High. She is a strong supporter of States' comprehensive education, despite all my efforts to get her into the private sector. (*Laughter*)

In the UK, talking of the UK, about 7% of children are educated privately and with very little Government support, although Deputy Bury had some help in her schooling. The support, of course, is being reduced by the fact that the UK Government is seeking to remove the charitable status of private schools for VAT purposes, which will result in a significant increase in the cost to parents of private education.

But in France, interestingly to me, 17% of children are privately educated, much higher than the ratio in the UK. They have very substantial Government support. Up to around 73% of the cost of private education is actually borne by the taxpayer, so quite a different conclusion in that country. What we see is a spectrum of international comparisons. I would say most countries do have a private education sector, but the extent to which participation in that is achieved varies significantly from country to country. The extent to which Governments support private education also varies massively.

Guernsey, of course, with 30% of children in secondary schools in private education, is significantly higher than either France or the UK. The level of Government support is I think now relatively modest. I think Deputy Kazantseva-Miller suggested it is about 11% of the total cost of private education, so we are in one sense an outlier. We educate far more of our children in private schools but we do not contribute hugely to the cost of that happening.

The point I draw from all this is that there is probably no right answer. It is a case of how long is a piece of string. Whether Guernsey has the balance quite right we could argue until the cows come home, but the reality is we have a balance which is now traditional in Guernsey and with which we have all grown up. Now, as a taxpayer I do not object to the fact that some of my tax pounds are spent on educating other people's children, whether in the public or private sector. Deputy Trott often makes the point that the taxes paid by a person on average income in Guernsey would not cover the cost of educating one child, but that is the taxes paid in one year and the costs of educating a child in one year and I do not think it is a reasonable comparison. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) The taxes paid by those parents over their working careers very possibly would cover the costs of educating their children.

More to the point, really, this is about what being a member of a community means. I pay taxes for all kinds of services that I do not use. I am paying taxes today for the education of other people's children and I do not mind that at all. It is part of what being a member of a community is all about. (*Interjection*) So as I say – I give way to Deputy Trott.

**Deputy Trott:** I am grateful because I think Deputy Parkinson makes good points, as ever. But the point I repeatedly make is this. There are members of our community who say, 'What do I get for my taxes?' Well, if you are on median earnings I will tell you what you get for your taxes. Your contribution educates one child for a term and a half in the state system. That is the point I am making. I hope that every citizen starts on median earnings and becomes high net worth because that will clearly drive us in the right direction. But I live in the real world. The chances of that happening are minimal and (*Interjection*) – yes, but the point is made in order to assure citizens that you do get value for money but your taxes do not go very far. Once again I am grateful to Deputy Parkinson for giving way, I appreciate it.

**Deputy Parkinson:** Well, I was happy to give way to Deputy Trott but I think we come back to the same point. The point is that anybody who is in work hopefully if they have good health and so on will work for 30, 40 years and their children will only be in school for a percentage of that time. So the taxes that they pay, even if they are on median earnings, will more than cover the costs of educating their children. But of course there is no way we can say that the taxes I pay in 2025 are

paying for this child or that child or somebody else's health or somebody else's social care. The reality is we all contribute to a big pot and the people who need services, which includes us – I now have a free bus pass; I do benefit from the system – we all draw.

So I think it is just unfair to say people are not paying for their children's schooling. Moreover, it creates perverse pressure. The central problem, as I said, we could argue forever about whether Guernsey has the balance exactly right and the answer is probably no one will know because it is shades of grey. Some people would say we should not subsidise the private colleges at all, but the reality is, for example, that Ladies' College occupies buildings owned by the States of Guernsey and pays a peppercorn rent for them. There is a level of public subsidy which is baked into our system which frankly cannot readily be undone.

But coming back to whether we have the balance right, I would say to Deputy Trott that if – where was I going? I have lost myself. Yes, the public contribution in the private sector – no, sorry. Taxpayers generally just make a contribution to the whole pot and by trying to tie the contributions of an individual taxpayer to the cost of educating an individual child, we make it more likely that parents will decide not to have more children because we are putting a moral pressure on them, saying that basically you are not going to be paying for the education of these children so do not have children. Actually, the central problem we have, the demographic problem we have, is that we have a very low birth rate, which is falling, and this community is in danger of dying out. So like Deputy Cameron, I strongly believe we should be doing more to support families. Provision for support for families with young children in the early years is something we should invest more in. (A Member: Hear, hear.)

So where do I stand on this amendment? I was happy to support the St Pier amendment because I thought it was a reasonable compromise. At the moment I am of the view that perhaps the Roffey amendment is a slightly better compromise and I may well choose to support that. But as I say, I think we are dealing in shades of grey. Some public subsidy is inevitable for private education and where the balance needs to be struck is obviously a matter of personal opinion. Some people will be further to one end of the scale and some people will be further towards the other. But I think it is right to consider whether the public subsidy to private schools could be tapered off a bit, especially given the history that the grant historically was much lower than it is today.

So for all those reasons I think it has been an interesting debate. I will listen to the rest of it and Deputy Roffey's closing speech, of course, but at the moment I am minded to support his amendment.

Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Oliver.

**Deputy Oliver:** Thank you, sir.

I will declare I went to Blanchelande Girls' College many moons ago, only for a year and a half, and then I went to England because I am very dyslexic and the headmaster said I would go, 'There are better facilities there for you.' Because dyslexia was not really a thing. I also went to Houguettes as well. My children all go to St Martin's and are very happy there.

I will not be voting for this amendment. Now, when I was back at Blanchelande there was a fee increase, and it was only £50 a year. My mum and dad went, 'Okay, that is fine' and they were quite close, I would say, to the headmaster. They were talking about the increased costs and everything and he said, 'You would be so surprised how many people cannot really afford that £50 a week that do so much to try get their kids to a private school.' I think it is really important that – and I think all the emails, to be honest, I do not think much has changed. I think if anything it is a lot harder to actually as a parent afford to send your children to private school than it was – I give way.

**Deputy de Sausmarez:** I thank Deputy Oliver for giving way.

I am just slightly concerned that there might be some confusion around the numbers because she has just explained a situation where fees were raised by £50 a week but I believe –

**Deputy Oliver:** A year.

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**Deputy de Sausmarez:** Okay. Deputy Oliver just said £50 a week, which is why the confusion was.

**Deputy Oliver:** It is a year, sorry.

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**Deputy de Sausmarez:** But this is £1.50 a week as explained by Deputy Burford.

**Deputy Oliver:** Sorry, if I said a week I did mean a year.

I think we have to look – and I think a lot of the emails actually really set it out well. I think for many parents it is actually a lot harder nowadays than it was for my parents. You just have to look at the general economy around us: mortgage rates, how expensive those are for most people, and also the amount we can borrow as well. I know Deputy Dudley-Owen –

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**Deputy Dudley-Owen:** I would like to make a point of correction because –

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**Deputy Oliver:** Yes, I give way.

**The Bailiff:** Point of correction, Deputy Dudley-Owen.

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**Deputy Dudley-Owen:** Mortgage rates were far higher in the 1980s than they are currently.

**Deputy Oliver:** Yes, and you could borrow a lot less. You can borrow now nearly 17 times your wage, whereas back then you could not.

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Everything has just increased and – sorry, I have been completely thrown off-track with all these points of corrections and everything. I am just going to say I will not be voting for this amendment. I think we voted for the Deputy St Pier amendment. It is much better, in my opinion – Deputy Roffey shaking his head – and I urge that everybody else not vote for this.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Taylor.

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**Deputy Taylor:** Thank you, sir.

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I do not have a huge amount to add to the debate. I will be supporting this amendment. I think had it been laid ahead of the St Pier amendment or the St Pier amendment had been lost I would have been thinking slightly differently, but as we now have the original Propositions completely off the table this is more attractive to me. Because I am in the camp that I think there should be a reduction at minimum, a reduction in the amount of funding or grants that are given to the colleges, and this amendment would now seek to do that.

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I was not quite sure, sir, whether – it might be a silly question – the amendment seeks to delete all Propositions and substitute, put this one in. Does Deputy St Pier's amendment still stand because that is Proposition 1, or does it get deleted?

**The Bailiff:** No, let me just explain, so we will pause the time. If Amendment 2 were to be successful, it replaces Proposition 1 from the Deputy St Pier/Deputy Ferbrache amendment. That is all.

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**Deputy Taylor:** Yes, so the point I was going to come to and say is will it come first or will it come second at the vote. We would have the option of the Roffey amendment and if that failed –

**The Bailiff:** Let me try and clarify again. I thought it was moderately clear. At the moment we have Proposition 1, which comes from Amendment 1 proposed by Deputy St Pier and seconded by Deputy Ferbrache. We do not have a Proposition 2. We have Proposition 3 and Proposition 4. If Amendment 2 were to be successful, it would become the new Proposition 1 and the Proposition 1 that was inserted by the successful Amendment 1 would disappear. It might be reintroduced in some way if there is a subsequent amendment. That was the purpose of Amendment 6 was to have them in a set of Orders, but that is the effect of Amendments 1 and 2, sorry.

**Deputy Taylor:** Thank you, sir. I do appreciate you taking the time to clarify that point.

So, sir, I will be supporting this and I have to say I am amazed that some Members think such a nominal reduction in funding will cause such catastrophic outcomes in our society, whether people will stop moving to the Island, businesses will not invest here. The figures are set out quite handily in the explanatory note. By 2032 we will be about £230 less subsidy of the States. Is that really going to impact if someone is looking to relocate to Guernsey? I would like to see a bigger saving on the States' part but that as a saving, is that really going to change people's decisions on whether they moved here? I think there are bigger factors. So, sir, I would have liked to have seen bigger but if this is the biggest saving that we can see, I will get behind it and I will support it.

The only other bit I really want to pick up on is Deputy Ferbrache has again referred to this figure 1 on page 18 I think it is and how we used to subsidise the private schools by £4 million a year with the special placeholders. But he must surely accept that in return for that the States were getting allocated was it 286 places, so the colleges were not getting £14,000 or whatever the fee was at the time from 286 separate individuals.

So it is not a subsidy in the same way. It was buying places at the college. It might have been coming from central tax money or some pot somewhere, but it is quite a different scenario. That is where I think the main rub is here. The grant has come in to subsidise the potential losses in face of the concerns that these – I do not say businesses – institutions would not be viable without these 286 places. That might well be a fact, without those 286 they are not viable, but those 286 special placeholders have absolutely been replaced and then some.

Sir, I am not convinced that a reduction of £230 over the next six, seven years is going to have a detrimental effect on Guernsey. Yes, I think if people are calculating their sums to that kind of level and they are going to be tight, they are probably best not moving here because I think if they are £230 short in seven years' time, there are going to be other factors that will have completely swamped their pay packets. So, sir, I hope Members will get behind this. I think it is one of those debates where people have made up their minds, but I just hope Members will get behind this.

Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Matthews.

**Deputy Matthews:** Thank you, sir.

I just wanted to respond briefly to a couple of points from Deputy Roffey's speech. He mentioned that – and it is a common theme that has been mentioned where we do not subsidise healthcare, private healthcare, so why should we subsidise private education? In fact, I think that was actually mentioned even in the email that was sent out by ESC to all parents drawing this equivalence between private healthcare and private education, saying if you go private it is a completely separate thing, you do not get any help from the Government, and we should do the same thing with education.

Now, it is true that we do not directly subsidise private healthcare in Guernsey but we do cross-subsidise private healthcare. Because what we do with our MSG contract is we employ or we enable MSG to employ consultants who can then use part of their time for private healthcare. Indeed, they would not be able to function on this Island if that were not the case because we just do not have – and the reason why we do that is we just do not have the size. If we were to operate a NHS-style hospital in Guernsey, there just would not be the scale to then have a completely

separate private healthcare facility as well. So it is a pragmatic approach to being able to offer private healthcare on the Island and it is a form of cross-subsidy that enables private healthcare to happen. So I do not recognise the idea that if you go private we should have no help whatsoever from the state.

1670 Deputy Roffey also asked us to recognise that for low income families they are not cast into  
darkness and that you can actually get a first-class education in the state sector, which  
I wholeheartedly agree with. My son is at St Martin's School and we are very happy. It is an excellent  
1675 school and they provide a really good education there. But what is denied is the choice between  
different schools. If you are not able to afford fees, what you absolutely are denied is the option to  
choose between different schools. That is something if you have the means to do it you do have  
that available to you. If you do not have the means you do not have any choice. In fact, we restrict  
the choice completely because we do not even allow parents to choose between different state  
1680 schools. We assign the state school to you based on where you live and if you live in St Martin's  
and you think that Vale School might be a good school for you, you do not have the option to apply  
to that.

**Deputy Haskins:** Point of order, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Point of correction, Deputy Haskins.

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**Deputy Haskins:** Point of order, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Point of order, sorry, I missed that.

1690

**Deputy Haskins:** At 17(6) the catchment areas are not actually relating to this debate.  
Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** I think that is right, Deputy Matthews. Can we concentrate on the amendment,  
please, and what it would replace, which is Amendment 1?

1695

**Deputy Matthews:** Deputy Roffey went on to say that it is not a battle between private and  
state schools and they both have their strengths and went on to say that people from low income  
would never go to a private school. But that is not entirely accurate because the private schools do  
operate some bursary schemes, which does mean that some people from low-income families  
1700 would get an opportunity to apply.

I admire Deputy Roffey's attempt to split the difference between the two original Propositions,  
but my feeling is that this is an arbitrary number. This is something that really should have been  
accomplished as part of negotiations or something that could be done in consultation with the  
colleges themselves rather than picking a number out of the air and applying that. So for those  
1705 reasons, sir, I will not support the amendment. I am happy to stick with the amendment as described  
by the St Pier/Ferbrache amendment. I will not be supporting this one.

Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Leadbeater.

1710

**Deputy Leadbeater:** Thank you, sir.

I am pretty much in the same camp as Deputy Taylor, I think. I would like to see Proposition 1  
succeed personally, but I am living in the real world and that is not going to happen. That is fairly  
obvious. I am going to be supporting this amendment. I would like to have seen something in  
1715 between –

**Deputy Soulsby:** Sorry, a point of correction, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Point of correction, Deputy Soulsby.

**Deputy Soulsby:** I think the original Proposition 1 has gone and we have now got Proposition 1 that passed, which is the Deputy St Pier and Ferbrache amendment.

**The Bailiff:** That is right.

**Deputy Leadbeater:** I would have liked to support Proposition 1. *(Laughter)* I do not have the opportunity because it is no longer an option *(Laughter)* but I would have liked to support Proposition 1. I will be supporting this amendment, however, but I would like to have seen something in between the two. I suppose you could say, 'Why did you not bring something in that regard?' but here we go. I would encourage everybody else to find some compromise to support this amendment. I am preparing a speech for general debate so I am not going to – I will give way to Deputy Oliver.

**Deputy Oliver:** Thank you.

The compromise is also that we just voted through Deputy St Pier's amendment. That is also a compromise as well.

**Deputy Leadbeater:** Yes, obviously, but it is not the compromise that I supported. *(Laughter)* *(Interjection)* Exactly, it is not my compromise.

This is the compromise that I could actually lend my support to. I did not really want to find a compromise but education has been so – I have been in the Assembly now eight or nine years, or whatever it is, and education was a massive hot potato when I joined. It had been for at least the term previous to that. This has been going on for a considerable amount of time and it is a massively emotive topic. We know by every time we debate something to do with education our inboxes just go absolutely crazy. But anyway, I will keep the rest of what I have to say for general debate and I would encourage people, Members, to support this amendment.

Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** No one else is rising so I will turn to the President, Deputy Dudley-Owen, to speak on Amendment 2 please.

**Deputy Dudley-Owen:** Thank you, sir.

Members need to draw their minds back to the points that I made in the opening speech yesterday laying this policy letter and also to points made in the number of presentations that we have given to States Members. There is a policy conflict that this reveals and this has to be borne in mind when making these decisions. The policy conflict is that we are continuing to fund with States' money a broadly selective system when this Assembly, albeit not with these people, not all of these people in it, have agreed to remove selection from the education system. So there is a policy that faces in two opposite directions that we are continuing to run.

So Members need to understand that and be comfortable with that, and I think many Members are. Other Members are not comfortable with it and are seeking to move away from that, cognisant of the fact that the colleges clearly need financial support and that in removing that financial support it risks a shock going through the system, not quite as seismic as the removal of selection itself was but albeit a shock still that we do not want to risk. So that is absolutely why a compromise has been needed across the spectrum of options that were offered, the two limited options that came forward in the policy letter from the Committee and also that from the colleges. So indeed Deputy St Pier has nudged towards that but not sufficiently enough to declare that we are moving towards resolving that policy conflict, not in any way. So I do not see Deputy St Pier's really is a



compromise. There is no compromise to saving and there is no compromise to resolving that policy conflict.

However, this particular amendment does start to resolve that policy conflict and also makes a nod to the importance of savings and the reinvestment of such savings in the States' education system. Because actually albeit £200,000 or slightly less savings can go a long way, our skilled educationalists in the States' maintained sector are hugely able and very adept at stretching the monies that they have and making a lot of impact for our most vulnerable children, especially those in early years and across the pastoral care system. So £200,000 can be stretched to go a long way and that is proved with our extracurricular enrichment offering.

Now, there is just a couple of comments that I want to make in relation to things. I will not go through them all because I think that people have started to get a little bit tetchy, which is unfortunate. I called for that not to happen and it is a shame that we have started to go through that. Speakers on both sides of this debate, I think myself included, have got rather tetchy about people's inability to be able to see the irony of votes that they cast themselves in previous debates about savings and Goods and Services Tax (GST) and now the position at hand. I respect those positions but actually we just have to see that they are difficult to align.

But Deputy Parkinson mentioned about the education system in France and I was lucky enough to visit some schools in Manière at the end of last year with yourself, sir. Actually, the education system was explained to us and the only private schools in France are faith schools. They are the only ones and, yes, they are subsidised but they are faith schools. So it is not quite the same as in Guernsey because obviously we only have one private secondary faith school.

Now, Deputy Kazantseva-Miller asked about what the Committee do with the rest of the budget and there is an awful lot to do with the rest of the budget. There is supporting each of our special schools, Les Voies, Le Murier, Le Rondin. There is supporting our friends in Alderney with the provision over there, excellent provision in St Anne's. There is also supporting the Guernsey Institute, the three organisations there, which deal for our technical vocational qualifications for post-16 and adult learners, 1,000 in total there of learners, our 12 primary schools, excellent provision there as well, Herm. I can go on, but it demonstrates that there is actually a real lack of understanding of how this cost base works in our education system. So there is a huge amount of services available on Island educationally wise and some of those the grant-aided colleges actually do benefit from, for example, SHARE, careers, etc. So those figures have not been costed into the per-pupil sum that you see in the policy letter.

So I would really encourage Members to support this particular amendment because the policy conflict has been glaring and it is one of those areas that we need to resolve. Absolutely I understand the financial issues. As I have said, the grant is an imperfect mechanism because it perpetuates that policy conflict. It is something that needs to be resolved and I see that that can be resolved in large part by the partnership conversations that we will go on to. But I do think that this particular amendment not only seeks that really good old Guernsey compromise, looking to reinvest those savings but also that resolution that I have spoken about.

Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** The proposer of Amendment 2, Deputy Roffey, to reply to the debate please.

**Deputy Roffey:** Thank you, sir.

The first person to speak was Deputy Gollop, who said it would not be the end of the world if the amendment went through, but he said he was worried that under this amendment there was an implication that we were heading to a cut-off in funding for the colleges. I do not see how he gets that. There is no implication of that whatsoever. There would be a review of how we funded the colleges in five years and in seven years' time there would still be a very considerable amount of funding for the colleges. In fact, the per capita subsidy for the fee payer would still be higher in real terms than it traditionally has been, much higher than it was just a handful of years ago. So I do not think he is right there.

Deputy Trott says choice is not a dirty word. He said that several times. Of course it is not, but it is also not something that is open to all. If you have a couple of children, for many families in this Island the idea of being able to pay £30,000 a year in school fees is just not tenable. Therefore, yes, it is fine, I support choice, but I think we also have to accept that with limited amounts of money to spend on education there is also a choice between the level of subsidy that you put into fee payers at the private colleges and the level that we want to invest in our state sector.

This amendment, I repeat, is a modest step back towards the traditional level of subsidy. It will still, at the end of seven years, be elevated well above where it was just a few years ago. Deputy Trott says this will not produce savings. It patently will. He said it runs the risk of destabilisation. Well, that is patently hyperbole. I think even the colleges accept that it will not. In fact, I was asked where did this figure of roughly 75% come from. Was it random, and that was the question from Deputy Kazantseva-Miller, and the point from Deputy Matthews was it should have been negotiated with the colleges. It was to a degree random. I would have actually gone slightly further, not quite so far as Deputy Leadbeater would have gone. I thought that one was probably too extreme, but I would have gone further. But other people were thinking different things and this was a compromise. Where I was heading was quite similar to Deputy Burford so we decided to join. However, I think I heard yesterday in Deputy Dudley-Owen's opening that in negotiation with the colleges they themselves had offered an 80% option as something that they were happy to live with. So 75% is clearly not very far away from that.

As I said in the intervention to Deputy Burford, the second bullet point does not in any way limit the number of fee payers that we would support at the colleges if they were amazingly – it would require something like a 40% or 50% buyout, given what is happening with the demographics over the next few years, but if they were able to drag even more pupils from a diminishing pot of pupils than they are now, then they would all be supported but the total level of the grant would be capped at the level of support for the number of children there are there now, exactly the same as the Deputy St Pier amendment where it has already been put in place.

Deputy Kazantseva-Miller was worried because some of the people in Guernsey who pay most in tax actually use taxpayer-funded services the least, so what are they getting? I think it is called society, is it not? I mean, I think that is how things work. Very often people who are wealthy and pay more in tax will choose to go private in all sorts of areas of life and therefore not take it. The point is they have the right to use all the taxpayer-subsidised services. They are free and universal to everybody, so I do not think that is really a good point. She said Jersey has seven private schools. I do not believe they do. I think they have state schools that charge fees, but that is a finer point, perhaps.

Deputy Burford said it was important that we all know that we all value all children in not only the colleges but the public sector and their families. Well, I certainly do. Although none of my immediate family have gone through the colleges, certainly a lot of my quite close family have. One of them was head boy there not many years ago and there is one of them there now, which is why I think you have got quite a few emails with the name Roffey at the end of it. Certainly I value all families but we still have to make a judgement. We are not devaluing them. We will still be paying more in subsidy per head than we were just a few years ago. How is that devaluing anybody?

Deputy Dyke cannot see the point of this. Well, he cannot see the point in making savings. That is where it suits. Of course if it was the welfare system he might feel somewhat differently. We have locked horns a few times over that in the past. He thinks it represents a message that we are trying to do down the colleges. We are not. The funding per pupil, per feepayer at the end of seven years under this amendment will be higher in real terms than it was a few years ago.

Deputy Ferbrache says that the Grammar School has gone. Well, yes it has but it is not – you can perfectly as well in an all-ability comprehensive school have an academic education that leads on to Oxbridge or anywhere else. People do it. It is not in high enough numbers but plenty of people do it and I think it is important that we should not say, 'Oh, with the Grammar School gone if you want any kind of academic education you have got to pay up to the colleges.' It just is not true. I am not going to drag him into personal details but there is somebody in my family who is going into

the state sector who is an incredibly high achiever, according to his exam results, and he is absolutely in the comprehensive system. He was in the first year of intake of comprehensive and if I had not thought it was possible for him to do well I would have tried to do something about that.

Deputy Oliver, it is good to know that we are fellow dyslexics. I also unfortunately went to a traditional grammar school that perhaps did not recognise quite as much back in the days that I went through that particular issue. Wherever we pitch the level of support, and as Deputy Parkinson says, it is shades of grey, we will pick a level and there will always be families who are on the borderline who either just can or just cannot afford to send their children to private colleges if that is what they choose.

I know a lot of people are keen to find out about wind power as well, so I am going to draw this to an end and simply say this is a question of we know we have incredibly limited resources. We know yesterday how limited they are. ESC was sent away to try to find savings and one of the areas they were directed to look at was the college grant. We know on the other side that there are concerns that too much of a reduction in the college grant could destabilise the private education sector in Guernsey, and we all agree it is important to have a thriving private education sector. If I am guilty of making an arbitrary figure what I am guilty of doing is trying to find some middle ground that recognises that money is limited and we want to put more into public sector schooling, which I do, then we have to try to address how much we need to put into private education to let it thrive. I think it is thriving. It is going to face the same challenges as the public schools as far as pupil numbers are concerned but that is a demographic issue; that is nothing to do with what we decide on the funding stakes but I think this is a balance. It will leave them with a higher subsidy per pupil than they had just a handful of years ago and I strongly recommend it to the Assembly.

**The Bailiff:** Well, Members of the States, it is now time to vote on Amendment 2 proposed by Deputy Roffey, seconded by Deputy Burford and I will invite the Greffier to open the voting, please. Will you now please close the voting, Greffier.

*There was a recorded vote.*

*Not carried – Pour 16, Contre 20, Ne vote pas 1, Did not vote 1, Absent 1*

POUR	CONTRE	NE VOTE PAS	DID NOT VOTE	ABSENT
Aldwell, Sue	Blin, Chris	Prow, Robert	Le Tissier, Chris	Inder, Neil
Brouard, Al	De Lisle, David			
Burford, Yvonne	Dyke, John			
Bury, Tina	Fairclough, Simon			
Cameron, Andy	Falla, Steve			
De Sausmarez, Lindsay	Ferbrache, Peter			
Dudley-Owen, Andrea	Gollop, John			
Gabriel, Adrian	Helyar, Mark			
Haskins, Sam	Kazantseva-Miller, Sasha			
Hill, Edward	Mahoney, David			
Le Tocq, Jonathan	Matthews, Aidan			
Leadbeater, Marc	McKenna, Liam			
Murray, Bob	Meerveld, Carl			
Parkinson, Charles	Moakes, Nick			
Roffey, Peter	Oliver, Victoria			
Snowdon, Alexander	Queripel, Lester			
Taylor, Andrew	Soulsby, Heidi			
	St Pier, Gavin			
	Trott, Lyndon			
	Vermeulen, Simon			

**The Bailiff:** Now in respect of Amendment 2 proposed by Deputy Roffey, seconded by Deputy Burford, there voted in favour 17 Members, there voted against 20 Members, 1 Member abstained, 2 Members did not participate in that vote and therefore I will declare Amendment 2 lost.

We will now break, resume at 2.30 and move on to probably Amendment 5 next.

*The Assembly adjourned at 12.36 p.m.  
and resumed its sitting at 2.30 p.m.*

**4. Blanchelande College, Elizabeth College and  
The Ladies' College : Future Funding Arrangements –  
Debate continued –  
Propositions carried as amended**

**The Bailiff:** Well, Members of the States, I think the simplest thing to do is to take Amendment 7 next. This is a replacement for Amendment 3 on the basis that the proposer of Amendment 3 is not here at the moment and therefore if you wish to move Amendment 7, Deputy Prow, then I invite you to do so.

[Amendment 7](#)

*After proposition 1 agree to insert a new proposition:*

*"2. To agree the following in its entirety:*

- to maintain financial support paid by the States of Guernsey to Blanchelande College, Elizabeth College and The Ladies' College ("the Colleges") based on a per pupil model the value of which is set by the per pupil funding for the 2025/26 academic year, with the maximum financial support per year not exceeding the total payable for the 2025/26 academic year, with the subsidy each year to be calculated using the number of qualifying students (as described in paragraph 17.3 of the Policy Letter); and*
  - that the resultant financial support to the Colleges is distributed to the Colleges in each such academic year based on the number of qualifying students in Years 7 to 13 in each College (as described in paragraph 17.3 of the Policy Letter."*
- and to add the following words "Or, only if proposition 1 should not carry"*

**Deputy Prow:** Yes, sir, if I may move Amendment 7, please. Thank you, Sir.  
Stepping into Deputy Inder's shoes is quite a challenge and quite daunting. When he asked me to second the amendment what he failed to explain is that he would not actually be in the Assembly (*Laughter*) so there we go.

Sir, I am going to be as brief as I possibly can be, mainly because this has been a long debate and the amendments that have gone before this one have teased out an awful lot of the rider arguments so I am going to really stick to what is in the title of the policy letter, which is future funding arrangements.

One of the reasons why I was attracted to it when it was Amendment 3 and why I seconded it, I quite liked it in the sense that it does what it says on the tin. Having had the benefit of discussing it with Deputy Burford, she said quite rightly, 'Well, this is not as sophisticated as the amendment that went before' and I am not sure that is the way I would sell this. I would sell this as it goes in particular Inder style, right to the crux of the matter.

A lot of excellent speeches have gone on and I am going to refer to them but I am not particularly going to go over exactly what was said. I think just to put the amendment in some perspective, I want to start actually from the very eloquent update statement we had on the 10(3) statement

from the President of the Policy & Resources Committee and I think the question of making savings, we absolutely must take heed of that.

1940 The update statement was quite stark. I will not go through it but we are talking about funding gaps of £71 million. We really need to take heed of that and I think there have already been some excellent speeches. Deputy Murray, in particular, I think brought that to our attention, as did Deputy Helyar, and they are absolutely right to do so. I think where we were talking about funding that we really need to concentrate on that and look through everything we do through that lens.

1945 I think the next speech I would like to refer to, and it has been referred to before, is the speech of Deputy Ferbrache. That has been complimented and I compliment it as well. Very briefly, I do it for two reasons. The first was right at the start of that speech he paid tribute to Education, Sports & Culture, the whole Committee and the President of that Committee, and he laid out very clearly an understanding that they are under resolution to look at this and bring it back to their Assembly. They have done a comprehensive policy letter and I absolutely support that Committee.

1950 There was also a point that has come up in debate around the need to educate our children in a way that they can fill the jobs that we need them to do without having to get labour from overseas and, in particular, the Committee for Education, Sports & Culture and their work with the institute I think is absolutely valuable in that regard so I endorse what he said. Also the other point is the one that I have already made, that Deputy Ferbrache made, is around the question of financial constraint and indeed the need I think to maintain financial support made by the States of Guernsey to Blanchelande College, Elizabeth College and the Ladies' College was not only made by  
1955 Deputy Ferbrache but by others, and I certainly am of that view. Nobody needs to persuade me of the value of the colleges and the need to maintain some financial support.

It is on that basis that this amendment is being moved. I think those are the key overarching areas that I would like to draw attention to.

1960 The other points that have come up in debate are around the question of partnerships, the partnership between the private sector and the state sector. I think I have not heard any adverse comments around that and I entirely support that. Again that is a theme particularly in Deputy Murray's speech. I say this because I can see nothing in the amendment that we are now debating that interferes with any of those things.

1965 I did not ask for the amendment to be read; it is quite simple so I think all I need to say about the substance of the amendment is the key is to maintain financial support paid by the States of Guernsey to Blanchelande College, Elizabeth College and the Ladies' College and to base it on the pupil model, the value of which is set by per pupil funding with a maximum financial support per year not exceeding the total payable for the 2025-26 academic year and that the subsidy will be  
1970 calculated using the number of qualifying students and that the resulting financial support to the college is distributed to the college in each academic year based on the number of qualifying students in year 7 to 13 in each college. So that is the substance of it.

It is also important to note that at the end of the two bullet points it says:

To add the words 'or only if Proposition 1 should not carry'.

1975 I voted for the amendment, which is now Proposition 1, because I absolutely wanted that to go forward into the final debate and this now gives another option. So what is the difference between that amendment, which was successful, and this one is that the amendment we are discussing now actually does provide a tangible financial benefit and that is outlined in the schedule that is attached  
1980 to it. It is based on the assumptions that have been used throughout this debate around pupil numbers and as you go down through the years you show based on those assumptions what those savings were. So it is about making tangible savings and that is the crux of this amendment. So it does maintain financial support but it also accrues savings as time goes on. The difference really with the St Pier/Ferbrache amendment which was a lock in for five years, it does have benefits but  
1985 it does not result in the same tangible savings that this amendment would do.

Before I sit down, sir, I would just go through a bit more on what the substance of it is. As I say in my humble opinion it does what it says on the tin. This amendment ensures the States' funding support to the colleges is calculated on a per pupil basis and remains at a level that does not exceed the per pupil funding in place for the 2025-26 academic year.

1990 Furthermore, it caps the overall maximum amount of States' funding support to the colleges at the level in place during the 2025-26 academic year, in the event that the colleges' pupil numbers increase significantly, and therefore does not expose the States unforeseen costs. The amendment does not provide for RPIX increases to either the per pupil funding or the cap on the overall amount of States' funding support for the colleges, such that there is a year-on-year real terms decrease in the value of the funding, the expectation being that the colleges should, over time, reduce their reliance on the States' financial support.

1995 It is modelled on an assumption that the colleges retain the same overall percentage of students, but recognises projected student population decline. The 'saving' column has been calculated to show the difference between the projected funding each year and the predicted value of the funding in 2025-26, the final year of the current grant agreement, which has been modelled on the same basis as in the policy letter. The amendment expects the savings to be returned and not reinvested elsewhere in the education system. So, sir, I commend this amendment to the Assembly.

Thank you, sir.

2005 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Brouard, do you formally second Amendment 7?

**Deputy Brouard:** I do, sir. May I speak now?

**The Bailiff:** Let us just wait and see whether anyone wants to raise any procedural motion first. Nobody does and therefore if you wish to speak I will call you to speak, Deputy Brouard.

**Deputy Brouard:** Thank you very much, sir. I will try not to be rude to anybody or mumble, as my colleague, Deputy Inder would do (*Laughter*) so I am replacing him partly with my colleague, Deputy Prow.

2015 The main thing about this particular amendment, and it should be looked at in its context against the amendment or the Proposition that is in play at the moment, which is the Deputy St Pier and Deputy Ferbrache amendment, so I just want to go through and just mark the two books against each other. I think if we look at the Deputy St Pier amendment the first words are:

that Blanchelande College, Elizabeth College and the Ladies' College ('the colleges') are an integral, valued and valuable part of the educational ecosystem.

2020 I think we all agree with that and although it is not explicit in the amendment from Deputy Inder it is certainly part of the fabric:

that the colleges' stability is in the interests of the Island, students and their families;

2025 In fact they will be more so under this particular amendment rather than with Deputy St Pier's.

to enable the Colleges to effectively forward plan

Again they will be able to plan forward for many more years than they will with a five-year rolling plan that goes with the St Pier amendment.

2030 The financial support to the college is basically the same as the St Pier amendment except with the Inder one it basically does not allow for inflation, so there is going to be a reduction by inflation very slowly over the years as that grant is not maintained. But there is a reason why it is not maintained, and the reason is that the grant in the first place was put there to help the colleges get through from when selection was removed and those placeholders that they thought they would

not get they would be able to be supported because they would not have enough students coming through, but as we can see from the figures that has not occurred. The number of students going there without assistance from the States through the placeholder scheme has not occurred so they do not necessarily need that extra funding. However from day one, the funding carries on at the level, as you can see from the plan at the back of the amendment there, at £2,265-worth of subsidy and that continues all the way through.

The savings come from two methods with the Inder amendment, and that is from the inflation slowly eating away at that figure of £2,265 which will become less valuable in 10 or 20 years' time, but also balanced against that is the pupil numbers, which are overall expected to fall. So those of you, and especially I looked at Deputy Dyke and Deputy de Lisle, who is always looking for savings, always looking for every stone to be turned over, there we are in 2033, the savings are projected to be around half a million pounds year-on-year all the way through as we continue with this particular funding method.

The next part of the St Pier amendment was that the support for the colleges is distributed in an academic year according to the number of students, and that basically continues with the Inder amendment. There is no change there. There is not a mention, I will admit, about the key performance indicators, if you think that is important or not, but the real difference is that the resulting financial support can only be reduced with approval of the States' deliberation and with five years' notice. What the Inder amendment does is it does not have a notice period; it carries on and you can see from the table if I can draw your attention to it on the amendment, to at least 2044. So the colleges have far more stability with this rather than waiting for the next States Assembly to introduce another review.

So I am very pleased, my daughter went to the colleges. Colleges add a great piece to the tapestry of the Island. I do not – from the parents' point of view, the amount of funding that we are giving for each of their children to the colleges, basically stays the same. I appreciate it does not get increased by inflation, but that is what we are trying to put back, put that genie back into the bottle because the colleges have been able to recruit the number of pupils that they need to make them viable.

This gives certainty but one of the main things is it will also mean that if student numbers do increase in the future, again, as with Deputy St Pier, there is a block limit to the grant to be that as it is today. So it cannot exceed that. But the projections, if you start adding up 10 years of £500,000, you are at £5 million quite quickly. So, please, those of you who do not like GST or do not want other taxes, I really hope you do actually come round to actually putting your vote where your manifesto goes. I would suggest that you, please, all support this amendment.

Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Soulsby.

**Deputy Soulsby:** Thank you, sir.

I thought I would get up early in this debate, because this has consequences should the amendment be passed. I do not understand now – I understand why at the time when Deputy Inder laid his amendment it should say to replace Proposition 2 – here it is just said after Proposition 1 put in Proposition 2. I do not understand why we are doing that when basically we have only got one other Proposition in play. It might as well just have been to replace Proposition 1 like in line with Deputy Roffey.

So I am a bit confused about why we then will have to go to general debate, should this succeed, and have to vote first for Deputy St Pier's and then for this amendment, if it gets through. I do not understand that. It does not seem to make any sense to me. Also I think we have had the talk about savings: are there really savings or not?

**Deputy Bury:** Point of correction.

**The Bailiff:** Point of correction, Deputy Bury.

2090 **Deputy Bury:** Sorry, and it is a tentative question point of correction. Is that actually correct, sir, because at the bottom of this amendment it says 'or only if Proposition 1 should not carry'. So does this not create a cascade amendment, essentially?

**The Bailiff:** That is the intention.

2095 **Deputy Bury:** Yes.

**The Bailiff:** So there would be a vote on Proposition 1, as it stands from Amendment 1. If that succeeds, there will be no vote on this, if it is inserted as an alternative.

2100 **Deputy Soulsby:** Yes. That is exactly, we could have two votes where we might as well just vote now about whether we want the current Proposition 1 or a new one. I do not understand why the words at the very end are not put at the very beginning, because I think that was confusing to a lot of people when they first read it.

2105 In any event, we have had the debate about whether there could be real savings or not and I think, well, that is clearly lost because we have got to Deputy St Pier's amendment and Deputy Ferbrache's amendment, which is now a substantive Proposition.

2110 I cannot support this amendment. We have already gone to the extent of supporting Deputy St Pier's, why would we want to roll back when it comes to this one? The other reason why I stood – I thought I would stand early – is one thing that Deputies Prow and Brouard did not reference was different to St Pier and Ferbrache's amendment is the split of the funding within the colleges each year. The Deputies St Pier and Ferbrache amendment – and actually Deputy Roffey's amendment, because I think he took this into account – took into account the points made by the colleges that they would like to be able to choose that distribution in an academic year should they wish to.

2115 That might not be an issue now, but when we get to very little funding, we are talking about a few hundred thousand here and there, it might make a difference for one college and another. It is felt that the colleges have all agreed that is something that they think is worth having and being included. It is not included in this amendment, so if Members do vote for this amendment and it gets through, I will be laying another amendment seeking to put that same wording in. I thought 2120 Members ought to be aware of that as we go through the debate.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Matthews.

2125 **Deputy Matthews:** Thank you, sir.

2130 Sir, I do not intend to support his amendment. I think it was described when it was presented to us as the wither on the vine approach, where the amount of money would, essentially, in real terms just decrease over a period of time, as inflation caught up. The problem with that approach, to me, is that we just do not know – we can predict in the short and medium term, perhaps, with a reasonable degree of accuracy what the inflation rate might be. The inflation update at the end of December last year had the RPIX figure at 4%.

But over a period of time, how on earth would we know what the inflation rate might be? It might carry on at 4%, it might rise to 20%, we might have deflation. So I think that variable element of not knowing how much in real terms this might be affected by, it would just be on the whims of what might happen in the global economy. So for that reason, I would not support this amendment.

2135 Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Gollop.



2140 **Deputy Gollop:** Deputy Matthews has made a valid point about inflation, because as Deputy Trott used to remind us, we were blessed with very low inflation for many years and then post-COVID, we went into a bubble that is now fortunately reducing, but it meant that we had some issues with social security building costs. There are good points in this amendment. I admire the work that has been done on the tabulation based upon, I suppose, current numbers as a proportion of the population, although it is speculative. One of the issues I admire Deputy Moakes on is he has been the champion for enterprise in Guernsey and to a degree the migration of professionals and open-market people.

2145 I do not think you should assume, necessarily – we have all seen a recent document on Alderney which has seen a little bit of a population decline, but we should not assume that will stay. We certainly should not assume that Guernsey does not have more migration of people with families in the future. I know there are obviously environmental and housing disadvantages to that, but there would be economic and educational advantages. We have to put that into perspective. This amendment perhaps falls foul of that.

2150 One element about the amendment that is good and it was a factor of the Roffey/Burford amendment too to be fair, is there is an idea that – although Deputy Prow very much emphasised the idea of savings, which has been a theme of the States, especially those who do not wish to see higher taxation, there is a philosophy that the amendment expects the savings to be returned. But I preferred, if I am honest, the earlier amendment, inasmuch as reinvestment in some of the areas that may come up in general debate would be beneficial.

2160 It does seem to me this amendment is targeted to those who wish to see savings, because it says the amendment does not provide for RPIX for either the per pupil funding or the cap. We have dealt with that point. But there is a year-on-year real terms decrease in the value of the funding. So the expectation being the colleges would reduce their reliance on the States' financial support. But that is an aspiration and, as Deputy Trott and others have reminded us, the colleges are not in pure terms businesses.

2165 They are more like foundations or charities. If they are to suffer a degree of pupil decline, which they might not because the colleges have been successful in attracting pupils from different backgrounds, from assisted needs to other things, if their numbers mean they become more marginal, which is part of the argument for funding in the first place, then I do not see why we should necessarily believe that they would reduce their reliance on the financial support. That goes against mainly our other aspirations, more of a partnership approach, more choice, maybe looking at how the Jersey state-fund independent schools or state-funded schools that charge fees. I like Deputy Roffey's niceties, all of those.

2170 This implies it is another parachute. It is almost a lifeline to people who really want it to end one day, but do not want too big a shock, given the amazing public consultation, and also to support, I think, the approach of Education, Sport & Culture to a degree. So, frankly, if this passes, so be it, but I think we have already passed the one that is most appropriate for the majority here

**A Member:** Hear, hear.

2180 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Roffey.

2185 **Deputy Roffey:** This debate is really quite surreal, because we are being asked to insert a Proposition which will then only be voted on if the new Proposition 1, inserted by Deputy St Pier's amendment, is defeated. I bet a pound to a penny, on the pieces of that vote on that amendment, that that new Proposition 1 is going to go through. So even if this amendment passes, and we insert an alternative Proposition 1, we will never get to vote on it. I do worry we may spend hours going around in circles. I do, as is quite clear, want to see a modest reduction in the real value of the per-head subsidy.

2190 I thought Deputy Burford and my amendment was far better in that respect, because the closures would have been known and what that percentage would be. If it is inflation, it could be

2.5%, it could be 7.5%, we do not know. I am not at all antagonistic to this amendment, but I do think it is pointless, because I am absolutely sure that even if this is inserted we will never get to vote on it. I urge Members not to spend too long debating a hypothetical, because I think that is what we are doing.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Gollop

**Deputy Mahoney:** 26(1), please, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Okay. Can I invite those Members who wish to speak in debate on Amendment 7 to stand in their places? Is it still your wish Deputy Mahoney that I put the motion?  
I call Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

**Deputy Kazantseva-Miller:** Thank you, sir.

I will be very brief. This amendment was indeed presented to us as let the colleges wither on the vine. Some of the projections given give you a 20-year view of what withering on the vine might look like in terms of savings. But I wanted to give you what in a 20-year period, if you look backwards from today to 2004, what the inflation can – the total inflation rate, RPIX, was in that period of time, it was 100%. So 100% inflation in that period of time would mean a 50% reduction in funding. So it is very substantial. It is not a couple of percentages here and there. It is really a direct signal of substantial reductions to the sector.

So if you wanted to know what managed decline looks like for economic growth, this is exactly that. This is managed decline of something that is absolutely an essential investment into the skills, the education of an important proportion of the children. There is another quite important issue with this amendment: it does provide an easier avenue to cancel the arrangements at any point in time. So the current as amended successful Proposition that is in play provides for a rolling agreement with a five-year break-out clause. We did, obviously, discuss that point, that technically that could be broken anyway, but the implication of the States' direction of the current successful Proposition is that the five-year break clause will manifest itself in a partnership agreement.

This does not provide any such direction of stability. So I think it will be easier if someone, another Committee or someone by requête or the States did want to change the funding model at short notice it would be easier to do that. I think one of the things that the colleges were adamant upon is to have the longer stability and opportunity to have much more runway for visibility. This amendment really does not help with that.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Trott.

**Deputy Trott:** Sir, I am grateful the Deputy Mahoney has given me the opportunity to speak rather than call the guillotine motion; I wanted to recognise that. I shall speak briefly, but I worked with a colleague in this Assembly 20 years ago who used to rise and say he was superficially attracted to an amendment and then he would almost always vote against it. That was the great Roger Berry OBE. Now I have to say, I was more than superficially attracted to this amendment, to the extent that I very nearly bought something myself of this type. But I sought the views of the colleges first of all and they were deeply uneasy with it.

There were a number of reasons. Whether this is something that has come from the economics department or various independent schools, I know not, but their view, and I have to say I understand this, is that if inflation rose significantly, but wages did not keep pace with inflation the affordability challenges for parents would rise materially. That is precisely the economic scenario that we have faced in Guernsey over the last few years (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) and that was evidenced yesterday by some statistics that I quoted that Members may not have understood the relevance or the connectivity.

Having been superficially attracted to it, I worry that that could adversely and materially affect affordability. Now we know that the grant – the current grant – is small but, as we have heard, a material part of the affordability for parents, which, as we know, is remarkably sensitive. One of the things that we have learned in this debate is just how sensitive that is. Many of us, if not all of us, have changed our view on what the profile of parents looks like at these independent schools. Once again, this is a modest amount for us that does not, in my view, breach the risk reward criteria. It does not reach it and exceed it.

In other words, the risks are higher than any perceived or real reward. My advice to the Assembly is to reject this amendment and continue to throw its weight behind not only the sensible amendment made by Deputy St Pier and Deputy Ferbrache earlier, but an amendment that has understandably and justifiably the full support of the independent schools.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Moakes.

**Deputy Moakes:** Thank you, sir.

I was actually really hoping I would not need to stand up after I did yesterday, but then I realised that I had to, to say that I have an interest or to declare an interest anyway. I needed to stand up at some point. As I am up, I thought I would like to say that I appreciate why the proposer and seconder have tabled this amendment. I know they did so because they thought the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture's proposal went too far. I thank them for that.

However, I cannot support this amendment or any other that proposes to reduce college funding. The only real difference actually between the original policy letter and this amendment is that the policy letter defunds the colleges immediately while the amendment does the same thing but over a far longer period of time. Net result, Amendment 7 will still destabilise and damage not just the colleges but the wider education ecosystem, in my opinion anyway.

I believe it has been called, as other people have already said, a withering amendment. sir, I do not want to see college funding withering away (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) or reduce the choice options or, as Deputy Trott has just said, the affordability provided to middle-Guernsey Islanders in particular, many of whom we have heard from over the last week or two. The colleges already deliver outstanding outcomes and provide taxpayers with excellent value for money. It costs the States less to educate a child at one of the colleges than it does in the state schools already.

Amendment 1 has just been approved with a large majority. It is a good compromise. It is time to move on now. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) This amendment is a step back forwards. Please do not vote for it.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Taylor.

**Deputy Taylor:** I would like to start with an apology to Deputy Mahoney. I was somewhat drifting away during his 26(1), so I did not stand. That was not to try and mislead him. But I absolutely have the right to stand and say my piece, so I will. I probably would not have wanted the 26(1) anyway. The point I really want to just pick up on is this, there is a bit more doom-mongering about 'managed decline' and 'withering on the vine'. This is not increasing the Government portion of the fee in line with inflation. The other way of saying that is, it is not a reduction of the fees that the college would be charging, it is just the reduction of the amount that the Government would be contributing to those fees.

It is entirely within the gift of the colleges to maintain their fee at the same rate plus inflation, and the fee payer ultimately would cover the gap. I do not see this as a managed decline, I see it as Government realising some form of saving. Because contrary to Deputy Moakes's suggestion that the St Pier and Ferbrache amendment is a compromise, I do not see it as a compromise at all. It is maintaining the funding very similar to that put forward by the colleges. I do not see it as a significant compromise that is being put forward.

The Roffey amendment was the compromise and with that out of the way this is the closest we now have to a compromise, because it is not increasing the grant. I always feel uncomfortable, sir, talking about things like inflation, because it is not my bag. I am not financially literate like some other Members of this Assembly. I can do my maths. I have an idea of how these things work broadly, but I am not one to really stand up and give an authoritative view on it.

But what I would say, sir, is that in a period which Deputy Trott described, and I will not try and repeat, but I think it was roughly where wages do not keep up with inflation, but theoretically the cost of the fees would go up with inflation and thereby people would struggle. I think it is mathematically correct to say that the inflationary effect on the college fee would be larger than the inflationary effect, in monetary terms. I am not going to give way to Deputy Vermeulen right now, but I will in a second.

So 5% of £2,000 is less than 5% of £1,500. So if this not getting the grant increase in line with inflation, that increase or a loss of increase, has to be picked up by the fee payer or the parent, inflation itself against the college's own fees is going to be a greater impact and is going to cause a bigger problem anyway. So I do not think we can see this as being the reason why the colleges will all be closing. We only have to look back at the table again, figure 1, page 18, the colleges were viable six years ago with 100 less students in them. It stands to reason they would still be viable with slightly less of a grant or if they lost a few students who would not be able to pay up the difference.

I am not going to give way to Deputy Vermeulen, because he has the right to speak, but that is all I wanted to contribute. I will be giving way to Deputy Trott though.

**Deputy Trott:** I am grateful, genuinely.

The issue here is that if inflation was, let us say, as it was post-COVID, running at around 10%, then it would be incumbent upon the private schools to raise their fees by that amount. But if wage inflation was running at 5% or 6%, half of that or at a slight premium to half of that, then clearly the affordability for the fee-paying parents would be more of an issue. It would be significant, that rise. In that example I have given, it would be 4% or 5%, admittedly an extreme example. That was the point I was making.

I told a story once when I was on the board of governors of Elizabeth College where we wrote to parents and told them that we were putting up the fees by 4% annually. Well there was actually a spelling mistake and it read 4% anally (*Laughter*), which was most regrettable, I have to tell you. one of the parents, who was quite a wag, wrote back and said that he was prepared to suffer the additional 4%, but if we did not mind, he wanted to continue to pay through the nose (*Laughter*), rather than the alternative.

**Deputy Taylor:** With the way that ended, that was most definitely a worthwhile give way. (*Laughter*) I have a joke about suppositories, but I will save it for private, Deputy Trott. I am not disputing his comments. If the rate of inflation on the fees outstrips the inflation or the increase of people's salaries that people would struggle to pay. The point I am making is that the inflationary impact on the college fee itself will be greater than the grant fund that comes from the States. I will give way to Deputy Brouard.

**Deputy Brouard:** Thank you very much indeed for giving way. Would Deputy Taylor agree with me that if there is high inflation, say in three or four years' time, but wages are not keeping up, which is the issue that he is – that would also mean that the colleges will not be paying higher salaries because one of their largest costs will in fact be the teachers' salaries?

**Deputy Taylor:** Yes, exactly what I was about to come on to, sir. I do most definitely agree with Deputy Brouard on that point. I am going to sit down before anyone else tries to get me to give way (*Laughter*), because I really do not have anything else to add. But I will be supporting this. I suppose the bottom line is that I will be supporting this, because I think there should be a decline

2345 in the amount paid by way of grant to the colleges. If we can see some saving back to the States and taxpayers, I think that is a good thing, sir.

Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Mahoney.

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**Deputy Mahoney:** Can I try 26(1), please, sir?

2355 **The Bailiff:** Can I invite those Members who wish to speak in debate on Amendment 7 to stand in their places? On the basis that no one is doing so, I will turn to the President, Deputy Dudley-Owen, to comment on Amendment 7 if she so wishes.

**Deputy Dudley-Owen:** Thank you, sir.

2360 I will be brief. As Deputy Prow has said, there is no reinvestment in education from this amendment. It seeks to allow the grant to wither on the vine, so to speak, by making no real terms increase to the grant. Similar to what is now Proposition 1, it also shifts to the per-pupil funding and has a cap. The policy intention here is clearer and that is why this is more attractive, for me personally, and if you are interested in those principles of that – the policy, which we should be, and that was ably explained by Deputy Brouard in his role as standing seconder, and I do thank him for that, for taking on that role.

2365 As I have said, I prefer this amendment to that of Deputy St Pier's. It results in a reduction that at least starts to reset the special placeholder buffer that some of us have already spoken about. So it seeks to right a policy we know, with the benefit of hindsight, was an unnecessary one. It puts it right slowly, so no shockwave resulting from it.

Thank you, sir.

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**The Bailiff:** Finally, I would turn to the proposer of Amendment 7, Deputy Prow, to reply to the debate, please.

**Deputy Prow:** Thank you, sir.

2375 In some respects, I agree with Deputy Roffey, we need to make progress. I just want to perhaps set out the intent of Deputy Inder and myself originally when this was Amendment 3. This was absolutely about trying to find a compromise. Although I am very pleased, and I did vote for it, that Amendment 1 is in play and is now a Proposition, this choice has been mentioned and the overarching point is around the need to make savings. Sir, savings come with pain, I am afraid. But  
2380 it is absolutely – in the amendment, it is first and foremost to maintain financial support, paid by the States of Guernsey to the colleges. It is about maintaining that amount.

I thank everybody who has contributed to the debate. Deputy Kazantseva-Miller put over a very legitimate view, which was to some degree challenged by Deputy Taylor. I thank him for his contribution. Wither on the vine, I understand what is meant by that, but I think it is a slightly  
2385 unfortunate term to use. Actually, if you look down the academic year, which ranges from 2025-26 to 2044-45, even on assumptions and the predictions there is still a very sizable general grant in monetary terms. If you take off the savings, in the terms articulated, the grant is still very considerable. A lot can happen to the future of education in that time. Sir, I will not say any more and I would just ask the Assembly to support this amendment.

2390 Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Members of the State it is now time to vote on amendment 7 proposed by Deputy Prow, seconded by Deputy Brouard, which if it were successful would insert an alternative to Proposition 1 as it now stands. I will invite the Greffier to open the voting, please.

2395

*There was a recorded vote.*

*Not carried – Pour 12, Contre 24, Ne vote pas 2, Did not vote 1, Absent 1*

2400

POUR	CONTRE	NE VOTE PAS	DID NOT VOTE	ABSENT
Aldwell, Sue	Blin, Chris	Burford, Yvonne	Le Tissier, Chris	Inder, Neil
Brouard, Al	Cameron, Andy	De Sausmarez, Lindsay		
Bury, Tina	De Lisle, David			
Dudley-Owen, Andrea	Dyke, John			
Gabriel, Adrian	Fairclough, Simon			
Haskins, Sam	Falla, Steve			
Le Tocq, Jonathan	Ferbrache, Peter			
Leadbeater, Marc	Gollop, John			
Murray, Bob	Helyar, Mark			
Prow, Robert	Hill, Edward			
Roffey, Peter	Kazantseva-Miller, Sasha			
Taylor, Andrew	Mahoney, David			
	Matthews, Aidan			
	McKenna, Liam			
	Meerveld, Carl			
	Moakes, Nick			
	Oliver, Victoria			
	Parkinson, Charles			
	Queripel, Lester			
	Snowdon, Alexander			
	Soulsby, Heidi			
	St Pier, Gavin			
	Trott, Lyndon			
	Vermeulen, Simon			

**The Bailiff:** In respect of Amendment 7 proposed by Deputy Prow and seconded by Deputy Brouard, there voted in favour 12 Members, 24 Members voted against, 2 Members abstained, 2 Members did not participate in that vote. Therefore, I would declare Amendment 7 lost.

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**The Bailiff:** We are going to turn next to Amendment 5, if Deputy Soulsby wishes to move Amendment 5.

[Amendment 5.](#)

*To delete proposition 4 and substitute therefor:*

*"4. To agree that both the educational provision for pupils on the island and the island's wider economy will benefit from, and be enhanced by, collaborative working between the States' sector and the independent sector; and that, in building collaborative relationships between the States' sector and each of Blanchelande College, Elizabeth College and The Ladies' College (the "Colleges"), there is the potential for additional opportunities and experiences to be developed that will improve the outcomes for all school age pupils on the island; and accordingly:*

- to direct the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture (the "Committee") to: encourage and support each of the Executive Principal of the States' Secondary School Partnership and the Principal of a States' High School to work in partnership with the Principal of a College to enable partnership working to develop between a High School and a College (i.e., "partnered schools") at the Principal level, and at the governing board (or equivalent) level to support the establishment of the independent governance model for the States' secondary schools; and identify ways in which the partnered schools and the Sixth Form Centre may work together collaboratively to establish shared educational experiences and opportunities for the benefit of all secondary age children on the island; and*
- to direct the Committee to engage with stakeholders in the States' education sector, the Colleges and others as necessary, to enable these groups to explore together potential opportunities to*

*develop collaborative projects between the States' sector and the independent sector, with the aim of mutually beneficial outcomes for all school age pupils on the island; and*

*• to direct the Committee to include in its Education Strategy Annual Report (or other similar report) for the academic year 2025/2026 and then annually thereafter, a summary of the collaborative work and/or opportunities that have been completed, are being undertaken or are planned between the States' education sector and the Colleges.*

2410 **Deputy Soulsby:** Thank you, yes, sir.

Little change of topic now, I think Members will be pleased about. I think everyone here will agree that a working partnership sounds great, that the independent and state sector working together must be a good thing, and it is. However, the question Members need to ask themselves is: when the Committee talks about being directed in consultation with the colleges and other  
2415 unnamed stakeholders to enter into a partnership arrangement with the colleges, will that lead to meaningful partnership working or will it be a partnership in name only?

Deputy Le Tocq and I want a meaningful partnership, as do the colleges. They made that clear last summer when they provided a draft of a potential partnership document which would do just that. It is unfortunate that, for whatever reason, nothing came from it and what we have instead is  
2420 Proposition 4. The existing Proposition is a classic top-down approach, whereas we believe that effective partnership works best at the grassroots level. Examples of good practice of which teachers in the colleges and state sector have experienced are those not run through central or local government, but instead built through direct school to school relationships.

Instead of believing true partnership will come from a working group discussion with officers  
2425 and politicians, the colleges wish to be able to form meaningful and mutually beneficial relationships with their counterparts in the high schools and potentially beyond, in answer to Deputy Cameron's point yesterday. That does not preclude working together on individual projects; it could be sector-wide, of course. But such relationships are more than just transactional if they are to be meaningful.

Real success is created by understanding the values and power of each other's institution and building an authentic platform of trust. This is very different to a transactional *quid pro quo*  
2430 approach, which is not really focused on the real benefits of collaborative working, that being a cohesive and vibrant education system that we all want. Members may ask: if you are proposing such a partnership starts to develop in this informal way, why do we need this amendment, just vote down Proposition 4? The President will argue that principles have the power to do this anyway.  
2435 Maybe, but it is felt that the explicit sanction of this Assembly will make it happen.

The experience of the last two years does make colleges feel that that is necessary. It is why the colleges felt nervous approaching principles before this debate about what is in the amendment, but they have now reached out, I understand and those principles will be happy to start those  
2440 negotiations. It is believed that the endorsement of this Assembly can bring true opportunities to make pupils thrive across the education sector through the different perspective and skills that can be brought to the table, with deep relationships and trust resulting in the most powerful collaboration.

ESC talks about what the independent colleges have to offer, but I genuinely believe that the colleges have as much to learn. This is not about one voice being louder than the other. It is about true collaboration and I really do believe that by embracing the colleges, the whole Island will thrive. They are not other, they are part of Guernsey. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) Rather than do things as we have already done and set up yet another working group to investigate, spend hours of people's  
2445 times in closed rooms getting hot and bothered, let us do things differently and start the work where the biggest difference will be made, at the coalface where it would directly benefit pupils as quickly as possible.  
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From there, yes, perhaps there can be wider systems-wide advantages. But, as we know, they take time and there are opportunities now. If you really care about the education of all of our children, we need to rebuild trust in the whole of the education system. We can only do that through

2455 meaningful partnership, which is what this amendment seeks to develop. So I therefore ask Members to support this amendment.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Le Tocq, do you formally second Amendment 5?

2460 **Deputy Le Tocq:** I so do and reserve my right to speak later.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Murray.

**Deputy Murray:** Thank you, sir.

2465 For me, what we are talking about now was the whole prize that we were seeking for. Some form of partnership arrangement between both parties is absolutely where we want to be, for reasons that we have already discussed before now. I am saddened that we obviously were not able to progress that before now, but that is in the past. What we have before us just now in the policy letter is a framework and it is not prescriptive. I am a little concerned that we have got a little too prescriptive with the amendment, with the best of intentions.

2470 There is probably clearly a concern that there are some trust issues here, and I understand that. But the truth being, on pages 78 and 79, where the partnership is described by the colleges themselves. This is where Deputy Dudley-Owen and myself left the conversation. This was put forward by the colleges. It was a very generous offer. It showed us that there was a true commitment to going forward with a partnership. So I am not entirely sure why we would want at this stage to limit the opportunity to try to access this, in whatever form it comes forward.

2475 I do not want to impose upon the two parties and particular intent or order as to how these benefits can be achieved. I would far rather they actually matured within the context of a trusting relationship and exploring exactly what it is that is of benefit to both parties. It has to be of benefit to both parties, otherwise it is not a partnership.

2480 Now in my professional life I was Marketing Director for Specsavers. Specsavers was built on a partnership, so I know a little about partnerships. I understand how they function and you play to the strengths of either side in the partnership to achieve the goal. The goal for us obviously is an improvement in the opportunities for all students to perhaps get to positions that they would never have got to independently, either in one side of the equation or in the other. I do not want to prescribe to either side what it is that they do.

2485 I think, as we have already just heard from Deputy Soulsby, the budding part of her amendment is actually already beginning. It is beginning organically. There has been nothing other than a desire to start this to happen. It is not being prescribed by ourselves. It is not being prescribed by a policy letter. It is, in fact, something that is natural for teachers to want to do, to learn from each other and to provide services and joint approaches in which all students can benefit. I think that is the prize that we all want, ultimately. I think we want to see that prosper, to learn from one another.

2490 Many people have said, and I am sure there is some truth in this, there is a lot to learn from the colleges' model. I understand that. Similarly the state sector has resources it can bring to bear to maximise that. I will put one case, for example, and it is not in here, both sides are struggling at the moment for accommodation for teachers. It is a major problem. It costs both sides a huge amount of money and it is losing us teachers on both sides, because people cannot afford to come here on a teacher's salary and afford to live. It is really challenging.

2495 Why on earth would we not consider them? Well we do consider them key workers. As consequences of them being key workers, I would like to make sure that we have the opportunity to offer that right across the piece, rather than both sides fighting for very small, very short, very few opportunities to actually accommodate the teachers. What happens in a market like that? Prices go up. There are many opportunities that we could be looking at here and I would not want to tie us down. I would not want to prescribe how they go about it, which I think unfortunately the amendment, with the best of intentions, is in danger of doing.

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I do not think the state sector, the public sector, is looking to impose anything here. It is quite the reverse. They are looking to maximise the opportunity with as little cost as possible. So I do not see why we would want to go beyond what is already in the policy letter, which is pretty vanilla at this point. It is not asking for very much. It is already happening organically. It is happening in the way that actually Deputy Soulsby has already suggested she would like to see it happen. And whoever actually began that, but it is actually happening already.

So can we not interfere to the extent that actually it would appear to be the amendment is doing? Let these two parties find the ground between themselves, maximise the opportunity. I see no reason not just to carry on with the Proposition that is actually in the policy letter.

Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Taylor.

**Deputy Taylor:** Thank you, sir.

I think I want to just follow on from the excellent points made by Deputy Murray there. I think the biggest contention that flagged up here for me comes from the explanatory note, because it tells us on the second page, third paragraph from the end, that:

it is believed that this collaborative approach should start organically at a school to school level without material involvement from Deputies or officers of the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture.

Yet the real meaty part – the first part of Proposition 4 is hard to disagree with, but the actual direction is to direct the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture to:

encourage and support each of the Executive Principal of the States' Secondary School Partnership and the Principal of a States' High School ...

That, to me, does not sound like the organic approach that is described in the explanatory note. So that is probably my bug bear, to get it out the way, sir.

But then I think, and this is where I think I am aligning with Deputy Murray, that I would be slightly concerned that the approach set out here might preclude a higher level of interaction between the colleges and the state school or the state school through the Education Committee, more specifically. I think we can all accept that there are common goals between the state and private sectors and there are common problems on the horizon. I do not need to go over it, but it is made quite clear in the policy letter that Jersey's private, or as Deputy Roffey would put it, paid for state schools, offer a very good offering at a lower price.

It seems to me that if there is potential to explore some of the fixed cost that Government has and the private schools have that could be combined and they could work through together, I think that would be a good way. I feel that would have to be done at a higher level than directly in the schools. The original Proposition, Proposition 4, I do not think would preclude the schools from having those discussions; indeed it sounds like they already are. I hope this will be a short debate, because I do not think this is strictly necessary. I think it is well-intentioned, but I think this is us getting a little bit too involved. So I would hope that Members will vote against this particular amendment.

Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Oliver.

**Deputy Oliver:** Thank you.

I will not repeat what Deputy Taylor said, but I do agree with what he said. I think that the one danger that I have got and the one thing that I did hear from the colleges is that they do not want it just to be a talking shop. They want it to actually have real meaning behind it. I always think that

it is great when Government tries to get involved, sometimes we make it more about us than actually what the outcome should be.

I just worry, with this amendment, I think it has got great purposes behind it and I really agree that it should be an organic thing that should bring the colleges and bring the state schools closer together, but then it has principle level at governing boards and that just goes, 'Oh, God, let us not do that'. I am in a bit of a tricky one with this amendment, whether to support it or not. I do think whatever amendment is it actually improving the policy letter? I just think is this trying to force something that could actually happen by itself without this, or do we actually need this to help this along? We might actually be hindering more of it than actually helping. So that is my views on it.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Le Tocq.

**Deputy Le Tocq:** I want to pick up from where Deputy Murray began, because I think he was right when he mentioned the word 'trust'. I was on the then Education Council in my first term, as I mentioned before, and I realised pretty much halfway through that, that there was already a breakdown between the central staff and senior management of the Committee and both the staff of the schools and the parents generally. I was made aware of that very strongly.

Now, we have lived through, since that time, really two decades of turmoil in education with very little certainty and flip-flopping of decisions and I take responsibility for that, we all need to take responsibility for that. All of us, including those in this Assembly. That has not only affected the state schools, it has affected the private schools as well.

I see this amendment and I am happy to support it. In addressing perhaps some of Deputy Oliver's concerns, this amendment has been put together with the support of the private schools. Because I do think to rebuild trust there is a nuance there and it needs to be done from the bottom up. Because where there is the feeling that it is going to go in a particular direction, I think it is very difficult to build trust. It has to be done little by little and largely on relationships, building on relationships that are already there, as some have already mentioned, but also encouraging others to emerge as well in due course.

I do believe we have a huge opportunity to see partnership work very well here. I do not personally want to see the sorts of relationship that Jersey has with its independent schools, but I do believe we could have something that works well for our community here in Guernsey, including all the schools in the Bailiwick and St Anne's in Alderney as well. So the best practice and opportunities to partner, to share resources and ideas, can take place but it really does need to happen, I believe, from the bottom up.

We need to be patient about this because, as I have said, sir, there has been an erosion of trust over the last two decades, so that is why I am certainly going to support this amendment.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy de Sausmarez.

**Deputy de Sausmarez:** Thank you, sir.

Just picking up on the points raised by Deputies Taylor and Oliver, my instinct is – I have had these discussions with people involved with the colleges. In fact, I was one of the people that put forward this kind of potential working partnership in relation to the Education Law governance policy letter. My concern, similarly to Deputies Taylor and Oliver, is that it may be too prescriptive and potentially restrictive.

I note in the Rule 4.1 information that it says that in preparing the Proposition, consultation has been undertaken with the colleges and the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture. Deputy Le Tocq just now has said that it was put together with the support of the private schools. What is missing from that is any reference to the high schools. I would be very interested to understand what those schools' position is, because I think in order to have any confidence that a partnership model, as described in this amendment, is going to be successful, we do need to have an understanding of both sides of that equation.

I know it is school-themed, this debate. It does bring to mind those sort of nightmare scenarios from playgrounds and years of old, where people are picking teams or partnering up. It might work really well for some, but not necessarily for whoever is last. I just worry that this might prevent the partnership model from being able to exploit wider opportunities beyond this kind of structure.

2610 So those are my concerns. I am open-minded, I am certainly very supportive of the motivation behind it, but those are the concerns that I hope can be addressed through debate and particularly in replies to debate.

**The Bailiff:** Alderney Representative Hill.

2615

**Alderney Representative Hill:** As you are probably aware, we have kept rather quiet in this debate because most of this debate has been about education up to 16, but this particular amendment is talking about sixth form, which obviously Alderney people come to be educated here, in either the College of Further Education or indeed with the private colleges. I wanted to share with you something which I think is important, that the school that I went to, they introduced systems where they share classes online with local state schools. The advantage of that is that, particularly on A-level subjects, that are less popular, for instance, foreign languages, you might want someone who wants to learn Russian. You might want somebody who wants to learn all these kinds of things. Often some of these courses are under-subscribed in both institutions.

2620 In fact, I do not know if you know this, but History of Art nearly disappeared as an A-level subject because there were not enough people taking it. I really support this amendment because I personally feel that you can actually combine education, both with the private sector and the public sector, particularly for subjects that are less popular, that are not necessarily worth it to have three students doing one in one and then two in another, and you put five together. But I think that is something – this is why I think this would lead the pathway to actually making that happen and it will support subjects that are not necessarily the main ones.

2630 Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Burford.

2635

**Deputy Burford:** Thank you, sir.

I started off planning to support this amendment because it seemed quite sensible on reading it, but the speeches of Deputy Murray and Deputy Taylor have made me go and read it again because I thought, well, what am I missing here? I have just been going through it piece by piece, and I am not entirely sure I am missing something. I do look forward to particularly perhaps members of the Committee contributing in due course.

2640 I would imagine we can all agree the first bit about we benefit from collaborative working. That would seem that there should not be too much dissent on that. Then the Committee is directed to do things, but the things it is directed to do are not directions in themselves, if that makes sense. I will try and explain that.

2645 The first bullet point would be to encourage and support schools working together. Encouragement and support may not result in an outcome of that happening, but by the same token, that would still be within the words of this amendment. I cannot see the harm in it, quite frankly, and I cannot see how it precludes other things.

2650 Working my way down the rest of it, we want to report to see what is going on. Well, that seems perfectly all right. And to look at ways which partnered schools and the sixth form might work together. Well, I am very happy for that to be looked at. So for anybody else who is feeling strongly against this amendment, I would appreciate comments because at the moment I am probably going to have to stick with my first instinct which was to support it, because I cannot quite see what is wrong with it.

2655 Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Roffey.

2660 **Deputy Roffey:** Thank you, sir.

I do not think we can overstate how much collaboration, co-working is going to be needed going forward. We have suboptimal scale in our schools now. I know we are used to them or we think they are quite big but they are not, they are really quite small compared with schools elsewhere. That leads restrictions in breadth of curriculum, it often leads to restrictions on all subjects being taught by specialist teachers.

2665 Alderney Representative Hill is right about lessons that only attract a few pupils from each school, but it is actually there are lessons that attract quite a good response, but are being taught by people who it is their second speciality, it is not their main speciality. I think we need both bottom up and top down, because if we are going to share those sort of resources, if there are only a couple of classics teachers in the Island, or Spanish teachers, or specialist sports teachers or whatever, then there is going to be monetary value attached to them going and doing things for other schools that will need some kind of framework at the top. It cannot just be done, I think, from a school.

2670 Maybe it could have been done if the Roffey vision for totally independent governorship had come about earlier on, but that was rejected by this Assembly. I think it does need a bit of top-down, but it also needs some bottom-up. So the bottom-up bit is attractive in this amendment, but I agree with Deputy de Sausmarez, it seems a bit prescriptive to me having partnerships between individual schools, I think sometimes it might be a three or four-way collaboration, I am not sure that specific partners – maybe you could have a library service that embodies both the public and private sector.

2680 Somebody mentioned the Cadet Force the other day. Do not underestimate how few secondary age pupils we are going to have in not very many years' time. Look what is happening in our primary schools now. We are going to need, if we are going to have any chance of sixth form surviving – and whether that is sensible or not, I do not know – we are going to need massive collaboration or there is going to be massive inefficiencies, or you are going to have really narrow curricula –

2685 curriculums, whatever the word is – because you will not be able to efficiently actually provide them. So I think I will probably vote for this as far as it goes but I do not see it as an alternative to – and it is an alternative, that is the problem, is it not, it is to delete Proposition 4? I am not sure that I want to do that because I want to go well beyond the sort of things that are set out here. But I do support the things that are set out here, I just do not want to delete the prospect for wider co-operation.

2690 But the one thing I would ask when she speaks on it, because we have all had feedback from the colleges saying that they believe that there has been a reluctance to co-operate from some in central. What I am asking for is an absolute assurance that that is not the case and it certainly will not be the case going forward. Because I think that is one of the drivers of this amendment (**A Member:** Hear, hear) in order to make sure. I think the amendment is a bit too prescriptive, but I would like on record a guarantee that – I know the politicians will change, but still it is the policy of the whole Department, that they will work together, all the state schools among each other but also the private colleges, because the demographic challenges are going to mean that we are absolutely going to max out co-operative working if we are going to have any kind of cost-effective education system.

2700

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Gollop:

2705 **Deputy Gollop:** Inevitably when we get into the school stories, I think poor me, because we mentioned a unified CCF, and I think me or my mother was told they did not want me in the CCF, perhaps because I would let the side – and Deputy de Sausmarez's heart-wrenching tale of being left on the sidelines with the football pitch, not so much me, but other people. I get the point there, when you can be left out in the cold and perhaps that is a little bit relevant to this, in that maybe some parties feel a bit left out in the cold.

2710        Actually, it's not so much an addition, the amendment which I do support, I think for some of  
the reasons Deputy Burford has said, is not a complete addition, it is just a restatement of  
Proposition 4. Proposition 4 is relatively brief and this amendment is relatively long, but you have  
to look behind the scenes a bit. I think already some speakers such as Deputy Roffey have already  
perhaps teased out that whereas the generic one in the main document was directing ESC to agree  
2715 in consultation with stakeholders a partnership arrangement to take effect as soon as practical, but  
it's not about funding, this goes into much more detail.

Now in some ways that is quite curious, because working with Deputy Soulsby and  
Deputy Le Tocq, they are not renowned for long speeches and nor are they renowned particularly  
for micro-states intervention. So they must have good reasons for this (**A Member:** Hear, hear) and  
2720 you have heard from Deputy Le Tocq his very lengthy political experience with education and past  
boards and personalities. Deputy Soulsby is in the driving seat with the Ladies' College role and  
Chairman of the Board of Governors, of Directors. That is interesting that she was acclaimed recently  
in a Ladies' College-produced press as somebody worthy of a blue plaque.

I thought, 'Well, yes, but you have to be dead before you get that'. We do not want to see that  
2725 any time soon. But the reason I mention that is to make the point that this is informed by a lot of  
work and understanding behind the scenes. Yes, it is quite specific but it is specific because it wants  
something real to happen, something to work rather than just something generalised. It wants,  
I think, a control that is shared between Education, Sport & Culture and the colleges so that there  
is a sense of them working together.

I have heard unofficially that partnered schools could work. Years ago, in a different era, before  
2730 the current principal of Elizabeth College, I used to belong to a film society group and the principal's  
wife was very much into literature, films and photography. We have a great photography exhibition  
this week at the Gatehouse from a public servant. But in those days, the then principal's wife, before  
obviously the current principal, was very keen on joint working, not just with the States' Prison for  
2735 a particular project, but with St Sampson's School. So that could be done on the level of arts  
administration.

I agree with Mr Hill, the Alderney Representative, that you can scope this for minority subjects  
as well. To me it is obvious perhaps that given the geographical positioning of Ladies' College they  
could work very well with the Le Varendes complex, the Elizabeth College with its historic roots  
2740 could work with St Sampson's, and for the sake of argument Blanchelande being in the countryside  
would be a great fit with Les Beaucamps. Maybe I am completely off the point, but the point is that  
would be examples. Somebody said there are three secondary schools on the Island, somebody  
said there were six. Actually, to be fair, we forget about the seventh in Alderney, St Anne's, and we  
also forget about the excellent work the two specialist schools that really do advanced pupils at the  
2745 Bomini Complex and Les Voies. So actually we have nine schools in a way.

Where I do agree with Education, Sport & Culture, and what I think somebody said, is we should  
not limit it to just the governance of the principals, although I have come up with a possible – there  
is not only an intimation it should work at the college, the institute – that is another anecdote,  
I started foolishly when I thought it was an easy term, a course on media studies and I could not  
2750 keep up with it, we had too much work, but the course eventually got dropped through lack of  
numbers. This was about cinema technology and so on.

So it is an example that even the institute suffers from critical mass issues, suboptimal. They  
should be working with post-16 as well as below-16 and across the Bailiwick. But I also think there  
is scope to work with those with special learning needs, special capabilities and different contexts.  
2755 That is not in the amendment directly, except through implication, but I think it is implied. What  
this does, it directs the Committee to engage but it is not just about the Committee.

I know Deputy Taylor pointed out a paradox but it is very much not at a political or principal  
officer level, it is at an educationist level, it is at a peer professional level, I am sure, of headteachers  
and Department heads. That is where the collaborative working starts organically, at a school-to-  
2760 school level. In the real world, when I was growing up, the college was full of retired Army majors  
and so on. Not so much now, you have not only got a much better gender balance of teachers but

there is real interchange between teachers in the state sector and teachers in the supported independent sector.

So the idea that they are different breeds is wrong, they can work together, they have similar roots. I think those relationships can be sustained, we need a collaborative process to work and explore those potential opportunities, and I think the advantage of this amendment over the base one is it actually – it is not only from two members of Policy & Resources who have had many years of educational involvement, goodness me, Deputy Le Tocq even ran a piano class in the Eisteddfod this year. But it is based upon their insight into how to work with professionals behind the scenes and I think, although it is lengthy, this delivers more value, more key performance indicators and a greater sense that all sides will be listened to and that we will actually see material progress, which Deputy Vermeulen and everyone else wants to see, within a year.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Bury.

**Deputy Bury:** Thank you, sir.

Fairly briefly, I was in favour of this amendment but as the debate has gone on wobbled a little. I think where Deputy Soulsby started that the attempt for this was to remove the top-down approach, I totally support that. There is a paragraph that mentions about, in the explanatory note, that this is about grassroots level and school to school, and it should be without material involvement from Deputies or officers for the Committee *for* ESC.

So I really like that, but unfortunately then in the bullet points, at every point, ESC is involved. That is the bit that I would have liked to not be there, because I think certainly from meeting with the principal of Elizabeth College, there is a genuine desire for what they want to call authentic partnership. It is not about anything to do with us, it is not about funding, it is about what works school to school and setting to setting.

I am almost starting to wonder whether we need either the amendment or original Proposition 4. Maybe just vote against them both and let them crack on with it. But I do think that there was a point made previously that it is quite important to get on record, and perhaps that is why the Propositions are required, that there are no barriers from ESC's point of view, that they are not being put in place and they are open to this partnership working.

But, yes, I think I would have preferred actually to see it go further and hand the power, for want of a better word, over and away, from where I feel it will still remain slightly regardless of which of these Propositions passes.

Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Trott.

**Deputy Trott:** So would I, is the answer. I do not want this to sound disparaging, so I am going to keep it as high level as I can, but teachers work well with other teachers, and there is much evidence of the existing relationship that exists within the independent schools. For instance, there is a lot of resource-sharing, a model which I know that my colleagues on ESC would like to see replicated. The truth is that bureaucrats and teachers work well together, less so. I am choosing my words very carefully because I do not want to cast any aspersions. But I am aware that the headteachers at the independent schools have already organised meetings with their equivalents within the state schools, and we wish them well with that discussion. I think the Soulsby/Le Tocq amendment just crystallises that in a better way.

Now, there is a slight end of term feel about this, but I am going to recount a story about collaborative working at its most finessed, that was told by former and the late Deputy Graham Gill. He once told us in a debate, and those that were here at the time will remember it, about a degree course that was being held in ancient conversational Babylonian. Does anyone remember that? I think some do. He explained that it was an odd situation where the examiner was not only the

tutor but the only other person in the world who could speak conversational Babylonian. The chap got a first, I am reliably informed.

2815

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Leadbeater.

**Deputy Leadbeater:** Thank you, sir.

I am in a bit of a quandary similar to Deputy Bury actually because I am looking at the – I really want to support this partnership working. I did take some time out to meet Ms Harford-Fox from Ladies' College quite recently and this was spoken of. I was quite keen to see this amendment come forward because it sounded good and I would love to see partnership working across all of the settings in the private and the state sector. But it does not jump out at me why the amendment is better than Proposition 4. Proposition 4 has actually got a time on it, a date on it, when it has to be – I know later in the date of the expiry of the funding agreement that commences in the academic year 2026-27, there is no specific time that this piece of work needs to be done in the amendment, and that concerns me a bit.

I just want to know when Deputy Soulsby sums up, if she can articulate to me just why and just how, because I am seeing directing the Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture, direct the Committee, direct the Committee. I know you cannot direct the independent colleges, but it just seems that the wording in the Proposition 4 about the Committee developing and agreeing in consultation with the colleges and other stakeholders, and with the timing of the academic year 2026-27, it does seem a little bit stronger to me.

But maybe I am missing something, and if I am missing something, I would like that to be – because I am quite open to be persuaded. I do like Proposition 4. If this amendment is better and it gives a better outcome and it can achieve more in the area of collaborative working between the colleges and the schools, if that can be articulated and explained to me, then I will support the amendment.

Thank you.

2840

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Dyke.

**Deputy Dyke:** Thank you, sir.

I am inclined to support this amendment. Of necessity, the original Proposition and the amendment are not specific in every way. They are not totally precise. But the thrust of Deputy Soulsby's amendment is clearly to put emphasis on the school-to-school relationship, which I think accords with what the colleges said in one of their emails and I can see that. So I think what Deputy Soulsby is doing accords better with what the schools want to do, i.e. the school-to-school relationship, which is probably going to be a sharper relationship than what one would have with our deep state in the middle of it all.

I think, in terms of moving forward, crisp relations between a head and another head and possibly some of their teachers is a good way forward to work on partnerships and collaborations. (A Member: Hear, hear.) So I think I will vote for this amendment.

Thank you.

2855

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

**Deputy Kazantseva-Miller:** Thank you very much, sir.

I think this amendment is an improvement because it does actually signal both a bottom-up approach and a top-down approach that different Deputies in the Assembly are looking for. Initially when I did look at it I thought maybe it was too prescriptive, it was not allowing for other elements potential collaboration to come in but I think crucially there are two – well, there are three bullet points.

2865 The first one is very much about signalling that direction that the Assembly would very much like to see that head-to-head, school-to-school partnership with the principals and the schools working together. But the second bullet point, if you read that, it says:

To direct the Committee to engage with stakeholders in the States' education sector, colleges and others as necessary to enable these groups to explore together potential opportunities.

2870 So the second bullet point really opens the opportunity for non-school-to-school collaborations and could explore all sorts of other opportunities.

I think the reason why I think it is actually very important to approve this amendment is because the colleges are really keen on the school-to-school collaboration. They shared those partnership details, my understanding, during the discussions when they took place back last year or a year ago. But they have not been included in the policy letter. So if you look at page 62, there are only two paragraphs in the policy letter in relation to Proposition 4. Section 17.19 lists the type of collaborations that the Committee is envisioning, and they do not include the type of school to school, principal-to-principal collaboration that the colleges are really keen on.

2875 I think what they have said in the meetings to all of us is that they really do not want to be part of talking shops, discuss things about just discussing things. They want real school-to-school collaboration. Right now, that direction, that in-principle agreement that we would like the colleges and the state schools to move in direction, is missing in the policy letter. It is missing in section 17.19.

So by approving this amendment, I think it's – I will give way to Deputy Taylor.

2885 **Deputy Taylor:** Sir, I am very grateful for Deputy Kazantseva-Miller giving way, because I just wonder if it is worth drawing attention to the actual wording in 17.19, which is – it does have a small list but there is a precursor that discussions might include but would not be limited to. So it is not an exhaustive list but it is just an indication of some things.

2890 **Deputy Kazantseva-Miller:** Fair enough, but given that the school-to-school collaboration was central to the partnership proposals that were, I understand, proposed by the colleges I think that is quite an omission not to include that in the list of bullet points in the policy letter.

I think this amendment further improves Proposition 4, because actually if you look at Proposition 4, although Deputy Leadbeater thought that giving it a deadline when it has to come into effect, I think that actually makes it too prescriptive, because what it directs, it really directs the Committee to come up with some formal partnership agreement. But in partnerships, partnerships evolve over time. They are not just going to come out of a letter or an agreement being signed. They come out from schools, from teachers, from officers working together over time. So actually, providing for more flexibility rather than saying, 'We will tick the box when we sign an agreement.'

2900 Actually, I think it improves that.

So I do think on a number of points, it provides both the bottom-up, that direction that we want the colleges to strongly explore the school-to-school partnership together with the second bullet point, which allows, let us say, for top-down approach, and making it less prescriptive that you have got to have something in writing within whatever, 18 months, two years, for more organic collaboration. This is an improvement, I think.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy St Pier.

**Deputy St Pier:** Thank you, sir.

2910 I want to draw attention to what I think is a fatal flaw in the original drafting of Proposition 4, because it says to direct the Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture to develop and agree, in consultation with the colleges, etc., a partnership agreement, and then the critical bit, this is on page 2 of the policy:



To take effect as soon as is practicable and by no later than the date of the expiry of the funding agreement that commences in the academic year 2026-27.

2915

In other words, it has got to begin before 2033 or 2034, which is the period that is referred to in Proposition 3, the next seven-year period. Now, I suspect it was intended to say to take effect as soon as is practicable and by no later than the date of commencement of the funding agreement that commences in the academic year 2026-27. That would make far more sense. But I think that is a fatal flaw in the drafting of Proposition 4.

2920

I am going to make just a couple of other brief points. Others have already spoken to the amendment from Deputy Soulsby and Le Tocq is really about ensuring school-to-school dialogue and co-operation. There is little which I can add to that.

2925

I was pleased that this amendment was coming forward. I had considered including it in the amendment that I prepared with Deputy Ferbrache, but decided it was perhaps seeking to bite off more than one could chew in a single amendment. But the principle of seeking to deliver an effective partnership at a school level was something that I was keen to ensure. I do not think that that is a guaranteed outcome from the original Proposition 4.

2930

However, for those like Deputy Leadbeater and others who are looking for further reassurance as to why this amendment is an improvement, I would draw attention to a matter which has not yet received the attention of the Assembly in this debate, which is at the bottom of page 1 of the amendment, this is not just about dialogue at principal-to-principal level, but also – and this is the critical bit – and at the governing board level or equivalent level to support the establishment of independent governance model of the state secondary schools.

2935

For all of those of us who sat through the Education Law debate, however long ago that was, and then the more recent governance debate, and who were expressing concerns that the governance model that was being put in place was not as ambitious as we would like it to be, for me, this is a key value add by this amendment by ensuring that there is also working at the governance level, and that there can be shared experience and shared learning between the two sectors at a governance level, which is not addressed at all in the original Proposition 4.

2940

I hope that that will assist Members who are questioning the value of this amendment. It is significantly different in that respect and for that reason alone I think it is worthy of support.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy de Lisle.

2945

**Deputy de Lisle:** Sir, I would like to make the point that this is nothing new. The secondary schools here have entered into collaboration relationships in the past with the colleges. The Sixth Form Centre, for example, is a mixture whereby courses, in that case, are more specialised, require more staff resources in those specialisms and thereby the college students actually participate with the students from the Sixth Form Centre through the public system.

2950

But my experience is, because I have gone through this, that we were dealing very much with a different student body with different attainment levels with regard to our collaboration by certain subjects, in my case geography. That was difficult to deal with because we were on different levels, basically, because of our student body being at different levels than the college's level. Therefore, we had to approach it somewhat differently and the teaching somewhat differently.

2955

Also, we were actually working for examinations on different examination boards. We had a different syllabus very often with regard to GCSEs than the colleges were actually attaining. What I am getting to is that I would keep it general rather than becoming too prescriptive. I would prefer what we have in Proposition 4 rather than becoming too prescriptive because very often I found that really the discussions are worthwhile but the specifics, when you come down to the specifics, you are dealing with basically a different student body and attainment levels and also different examination boards.

2960

Thank you.

2965 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Fairclough.

**Deputy Fairclough:** Thank you, sir.

I think we are rather making heavy weather of this. There is no doubt about it, we are strongest when we work together. I will be supporting this.

2970 Interestingly, the colleges communicated with all Deputies on Tuesday and sent them some useful thoughts on some of the amendments. I take comfort in some of the words that we were sent. Firstly, they say it is important to note that the colleges already do a lot of partnership work with the state schools, and they go on to give a number of examples. They go on to say that they believe there is an opportunity to deepen and strengthen these relationships further.

2975 They said they welcome the desire to collaborate as indicated in Proposition 4, but believe that this amendment is more beneficial for a number of key reasons. Now, I will not go on and read this at length, but they say they are keen to avoid relying on working group discussions with Education officers and ESC. Instead, we wish to be able to form meaningful and mutually beneficial relationships with our counterparts in the high schools. They go on to say:

2980 Trust and relationships are at the heart of effective collaboration. Real success is created by understanding the values and power of each other's institution and building an authentic platform of trust.

There is nothing there that would put me off this amendment. I think that the colleges are seeking reassurance from us through this amendment that they can step off on the right foot moving forward. I think more than ever, it is important that the sectors work together and collaboratively. I will be supporting this amendment.

2985 Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Queripel.

2990 **Deputy Queripel:** Sir, buddying up sounds like a terrific idea to me.

I am all in favour of it, if it is going to be inclusive and not exclusive in any way. With that in mind, picking up on something Deputy de Sausmarez said early on, in the 1970s, an American singer named Janis Ian had a worldwide hit with a song entitled 'At Seventeen', which had the immortal lines:

2995 For those of us whose names were never called when choosing sides at basketball.

I am picking up on the points made by Deputy Oliver and Deputy Leadbeater. At the moment, I cannot see how this amendment is going to improve on the actual Proposition itself. So, if Deputy Soulsby can sell it to me when she responds, I will willingly support it. But, also, I am in a bit of a quandary, because I am wondering if she can assure me that this is not just a wonderful aspiration that will fall at the first hurdle due to the inevitable lack of resources that we are all tired of hearing about. I would be grateful if she could, in some way, provide me with that assurance, this is not just an aspiration, this is actually going to work, for the benefit of all the students.

3000 Thank you, sir.

3005 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Haskins.

**Deputy Haskins:** Thank you, sir.

3010 Sir, my issue with the amendments that have been raised by a few people is, it is just too prescriptive, save for the technicality that Deputy St Pier has raised. I think even just mentioning in debate already sends a signal of intention. So I do believe that should be covered.

Now, in my mind, sir, there is nothing in the original Proposition 4 that prevents anything from this amendment from taking place. That is the crux of it. But it is not the same the other way around,

and I will go through that. I have said this before, and Deputy Kazantseva-Miller has said it, that we need to think outside the box.

Now, Deputy Roffey has said, and I do agree with him on this, we will need massive collaboration or have massive inefficiencies. Members, how many times have I said we really should be taking heed and understanding what the impact is going to be of our population demographic. We really need to start understanding that. I know many of us, many of the educationalists at the colleges, they do, very much so. They are working really hard on the impacts of artificial intelligence. It is going to be hugely impactful.

I said just before, how come our original Proposition works, can do everything that the amendment can do, but not the other way around. Well that, sir, is because of the system-wide collaborations. It is all very well to say, right, this school should partner with this school but really, and this has always been one of Guernsey's biggest challenges, it is scale. I think Deputy Trott mentioned Babylonian, but Deputy Gollop mentioned, was it music? Music, or some course where you only have three.

My point is, Members, that in order to get those collaboratives, the wider benefits from a system, and, Members, that is what we are talking about here, a whole education system, that collaboration, of course, needs to be bottom-up but it also needs top-down support. Now, I think, I hope, Members here should have some comfort that from the governance debate, we have said, there, schools, here are governing boards, the Education Investigation and Advisory Committee (EDIAC) is coming and saying, 'We will help and we will decide, the next Assembly will decide, this is the level of devolution that you are going to have', hopefully the maximum that Deputy Roffey would like to see. Here it is. There is nothing stopping those governing boards.

In fact, I have been in governing boards already. I chair almost half and Deputy Dudley-Owen chairs the other half. It has been encouraged, 'Reach out'. There is nothing stopping them, absolutely nothing. The difference with the original Proposition, though, is that as Deputy Leadbeater has already highlighted, to direct Education, Sport & Culture to develop and agree. To develop and agree, not encourage and support, there a really clear direction from this original Proposition 4.

Members, please do not support this one. It is already covered in the original Proposition and I ask you to not vote for this amendment.

Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** As I do not see any other Member rising to speak on Amendment 5, I will turn to the President, Deputy Dudley-Owen, to speak to that amendment if she wishes to do so.

**Deputy Dudley-Owen:** Thank you, sir.

Sir, and I have omitted to thank movers of all the amendments that we have had laid before the States in this debate, and I thank them now for their prior engagement and consultation. There was some consultation with me on this amendment, but not with the people I was told had been consulted with, and that is the principals of the schools most impacted in the state sector. They were contacted this Monday with the request for a quick coffee or similar that same day or the next.

While Deputy Le Tocq has sought to reassure Deputy Oliver that the amendment has the support of the college principals, I know it was not put together with the States' secondary leaders, despite me stating that it should be.

The amendment has some good qualities, such as reporting in the Education Statutory Report, and I think this is a good suggestion and take that on board. As I have stated, we know that partnerships can be very beneficial for all parties engaged with them. This type of collaboration is widespread. Actually there are templates in the UK that can be used for this, really good case studies. Many of our educationists have been involved in working in those partnerships.

In actual fact, the state sector has already achieved this through an existing and strengthened collaboration and partnership across all areas of education, including our state schools and settings. Hence the term 'Secondary School Partnership' because we have already pioneered one for this

state sector. We partner with schools in other islands too, who share some of the challenges we face, and with schools and settings on the mainland in the UK, where best practice is shared in both directions, all done without our direct operational intervention. Instead, politically, what we have done is set the high-level strategic aims and we have empowered our leaders to work towards them.

We have not been prescriptive in what they should do. Partnership and collaboration are widespread in education and we should be no different in seeking to optimise opportunities to work closer together. So I will just give you some examples of where this is already done with the grant-aided colleges. Careers Guernsey are an all-age community and they have engagement with the grant-aided colleges, inclusion services and ALNCo training, additional learning needs training and also safeguarding policies, health and personal development and partnership officer support, educational psychologists and school attendance service advice and guidance provided. And there are many more. An operational one that I have come across recently is Blanchelande has pioneered the excellent exchange trip with Masnières through the Royal Guernsey Light Infantry Trust and is now going to be working with St Sampson's where some of their students are going to be going this year.

Those organic grassroots levels, school-to-school partnerships working is already happening and has happened for many years. Where I part company, however, with this particular amendment is not at all in the partnership suggestions themselves. This is already an existing proposal for the Committee, as people have spoken about in Proposition 4. In my view, the partnership, as Deputy Murray has articulated, is a prize in all of this, for many of the reasons already spoken about by others this week. We are on the same page. If there was no suggestion of partnership emanating from the Committee, sir, I would understand the need for this this amendment, not in its current form, but I would see a need.

But that is not the case. Deputy Murray has already spoken about how we have met with the colleges many months ago to explore the idea of partnership. In actual fact, many of the items that are articulated, some of those were spoken about in those partnership agreements. But we got, unfortunately, a bit waylaid on the grant agreement work, and the purpose of adding Proposition 4 is clearly to reinvigorate that work with the support of the Assembly behind us.

My concern with the amendment is that it replaces the existing Proposition rather than adds to it. That is problematic. Like other Members have said, it feels far too prescriptive. The directives to the Committee to enable the stakeholders in the state sector and the colleges, and perhaps others, to enable groups to explore potential opportunities. Well, the legal status, shortly to be granted to the new governance system that Members positively embraced a few weeks ago, is exactly where this sits. The governance boards are being given that power and also strong messaging to find their partnerships and relationships outside of their direct school community, looking at the needs, values and best interests of their individual setting or settings.

This particular amendment feels prescriptive because it is. It is directing people in named roles to develop partnerships. Letting leaders lead is what this Committee's philosophy has been throughout this term, in line with the general principle of subsidiarity as stated in our Rules of Procedure, which highlights that as far as possible, matters ought to be handled by the smallest, lowest or least centralised component authority. Least centralised is the key here. Least centralised, but not rudderless. The Committee's existing proposal allows for a high-level strategic enabling framework to be put in place as simple as an MOU with the three colleges, but leaving each individual school, both in in the state sector and private sector, whichever school, not specific schools, whichever ones feel they want to partner to find their optimum levels of collaboration.

So whether that be school to school, or school to schools in the plural, secondary to primary, mainstream with specialist school or whatever, whichever combination. Freeing, not fettering is key to success. I have to say, it is very disappointing that the college leaders seem to have pre-determined which schools they will partner with before those state school leaders have ever been asked for their views.

The concern that I have with this is that we have to come back to the principle of being done with, not done to. I am also very disappointed that there has been no approach to the leaders in

the specialist schools, or to St Anne's, and this must feel very disenfranchising for those school leaders. It is for these types of reasons that some forethought, some strategic oversight and route setting is needed, but certainly does not put any barriers in the way of schools and governing boards working together now. This whole debate emanates from the legacy of removing selection before we had properly work through all the consequences and address them at a strategic level. Please, let us not make the same mistake again.

We are national Government, not the operational manager. This is parliament directing headteachers. We want to empower our new interim governors to begin to do this work already, and it feels so heavy-handed to direct the Committee how to undertake the work set out in Committee's existing Proposition 4.

The other concern I have, others have mentioned, is that the amendment ignores completely some of the system level benefits that have been discussed with the colleges, such as working together on staff recruitment and retention. That cannot be done at an individual school level. Such as shared policy libraries, cross-sector staff secondments, and shared accommodation for staff. That cannot be done at a school level.

**Deputy Kazantseva-Miller:** Point of correction, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Point of correction, Deputy Kazantseva-Miller.

**Deputy Kazantseva-Miller:** Sir, the second bullet point of the amendment allows for plenty of flexibility for the Committee to establish all sorts of potential opportunities for developing collaborative projects between the state sector and independent sectors. So all of the things that the President is talking about and those that were mentioned in the policy absolutely can still be developed under this amendment through the second bullet point.

Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Dudley-Owen.

**Deputy Dudley-Owen:** Thank you.

Likewise, sir, they can be done without the amendment. The work of the Government's Investigatory and Advisory Committee, the EDIAC, has not begun. That work will begin early in the next term, before the end of the year, early the next political term and is due to report in 2026. We do not know what the recommendations will be and I fully expect that Committee to consult with the colleges along their way as their views and experience will be informative.

Sir, I do not think this amendment is necessary. We absolutely want to work with the colleges and I have personally paved the way for that in the discussions we have already had with the colleges representative in the run-up to this debate and we have already begun to discuss on how we will move forward together.

I would not support an amendment that sought to tell a ward manager at the hospital what to do. I would not support an amendment that sought to tell a watch leader at the fire station what to do, or a line manager in the Income Support Team. This amendment is too operational and I ask Members to leave the original Proposition in place.

Finally, in relation to Deputy St Pier's fatal flaw, actually, no, it was a long stop date and was envisaged that as the grant tapered down in relation to Proposition 1, that the partnership working would pick up and build. Meetings took place last year and those obviously will be picked up in haste and there is no need for them to take that long now that this recommendation has been replaced.

Finally, I would like to give Deputy Roffey, I would like to give each Member of the Assembly and those listening, the colleges included, a strong reassurance that the Committee is absolutely committed to robust and open collaboration for the benefit of our Island children and that will be enabled by the Proposition 4. Please, Members. I ask you to dismiss this amendment.

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**The Bailiff:** Finally, I will turn back to the proposer of Amendment 5, Deputy Soulsby, to reply to the debate, please.

**Deputy Soulsby:** Thank you, sir.

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I think the one person who summed it up for me by listening to the debate was Deputy Burford.

I thought I was in a parallel universe. I was looking at a different amendment to the one that I know that we put forward, that apparently this is so prescriptive when there is nothing set in stone at all. It is about encouraging and supporting and trying to make things happen now and not work on this, 'Let us have another working group to think about these big system-wide things', which of course could be done as well. We probably do not even need that Proposition 4 if we want people to work together for a better system. But I think Deputy Trott quoted Graham – the late Graham Gill – who said, 'It is not about what it is about.' (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) (*Laughter*)

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To be honest here, I toned down my opening speech because there has been a lot of frustration and anger among the colleges. To be honest, the amendment arises because of the colleges' trust in what has been done having broken down. They feel absolutely there needs to be an amendment so they know that we can have that real partnership working. Deputy Dudley-Owen said wonderful things, but she says, 'I cannot disagree with this system-wide looking at this and we can all work together and we try to do this', but at every stage the colleges have been prevented from talking to their colleagues in the state sector.

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**A Member:** Absolute nonsense.

**Deputy Soulsby:** Deputy Haskins was talking about AI and the importance of AI. Absolutely, and our principal at Ladies' College has been at the forefront of talking about AI. Indeed, the college did some AI training, to which it actually requested whether the teachers in the state school could take part, and they were refused to be allowed to take time out to go to that training. That is the sort of experience that they are –

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**Deputy Dudley-Owen:** Point of correction, sir.

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**The Bailiff:** Point of correction, Deputy Dudley-Owen.

**Deputy Dudley-Owen:** I was really hoping that we were not going to get to this level, but that suggestion, that statement, I have heard it made a number of times now, so I took it upon myself to look into that and it is categorically untrue.

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**Deputy Dudley-Owen:** Deputy Soulsby.

**Deputy Soulsby:** Thank you, sir.

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Yes, I would rather we were not having to talk at these things, Deputy Dudley-Owen, but it is because of the response that Deputy Dudley-Owen made that I thought it was necessary to do so. The information I have came directly to those who requested – who reached out and they were rebuffed. We can talk one against the other, but that is the information I had, but that is not the only example, other examples of trying to work with colleges and not being able to get anywhere. So when Deputy Dudley-Owen says, 'Oh no, they did not talk to the principals of the state schools' it is because the colleges are so nervous, they know that they are getting nowhere when they try to speak to the state sector. That is at the heart of this amendment. It is enabling that to happen.

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I heard Deputy Dudley-Owen speak about giving a Committee assurance but I will happily give way if she can give the assurance that there will be collaboration at the officer level and they will not experience anything other than that. I am happy to give way.

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**Deputy Dudley-Owen:** Thank you.

Absolutely. I am a person of my word and I am a person of integrity (**Several Members:** Hear, hear.) and certainly the work that I have done, huge strides that I made in order not just to lead the Committee through very difficult times this particular term with the resilience and continuously coming back up for air, I am very keen to foster extremely positive and strong relationships between the state sector and the colleges' sector, but actually that should not preclude head teachers working together to find their professional sweet spots for the best interests of their individuals school, along with their governing boards.

**Deputy Soulsby:** I thank her for that.

I take it that will mean that the college principals will now then have the bulletins that I think they used to get sent to them again, because they were all stopped, and all that information that enabled collaborative working was taken away. So hopefully the college principals will get that. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.)

There was a lot of talk by some saying this was only principal-to-principal level, but no, it is governor-to-governor level, and Deputy St Pier references that. That is very true and I will be very happy, as a Governor of Ladies' College, to work with the governors in the new state system and collaborating with them and seeing how we can help them and they can help us, very happy to do that. But also there is talk about, 'Oh, it is only at this ground level and we need systems-wide stuff.' We have covered that off, as others and I think Deputy Kazantseva-Miller has said, the potential for groups to explore potential opportunities to develop collaborative projects between the state sector and the independent sector, so it is already covered in that bullet point 2.

Yes, as I say, my response to Deputy Dudley-Owen, yes, if we can work together collaboratively, that would be great, but I think this amendment has absolutely come out of the frustration of the colleges because when they reach out, they are always rebuffed and very much feel frozen out. Yes, I have mentioned more or less why I cannot understand why people think this is more prescriptive because it actually gives a lot of opportunity to come up with new ways of working together. Deputy Dyke, I think he made the right statement. This is sharper. It is not more prescriptive, it is just sharper and says what really needs to be done to make a difference now.

As I said in my opening speech, it is all very well talking about systems-wide changes and we always talk about how we can recreate something and it will be so easy, but we know how long trying to do these system-wide changes takes. We have many strategies out there that have taken years. This will enable real change to happen now. Deputy Oliver: I think she thought she was concerned about the colleges, but this is what the colleges support and I have had close discussion with them about that. That was in response to Deputy Roffey. I think he said he wants that wider co-operation, but that is in bullet point 2, absolutely.

Deputy Murray: he actually epitomised the issue that we have with the current Proposition, talking about, 'Oh, we can look at things like staff accommodation.' That is fine, but that goes back to a transactional issue. Does that need to have a signed partnership arrangement between the colleges and ESC to do that? Surely you can just talk about what opportunities there are. It is just a transactional issue that can be dealt with just by having a chat, I think. I do not understand how those transactional issues relate to needing a partnership arrangement.

I thank Deputy Kazantseva-Miller for her comments. Yes, I think she is right. I think the policy letter does actually look like two hands have written it. For a lot of it, it is very much, 'Well, we do not really want the colleges here. We do not want to give them any funding. Let them fend for themselves' and there is about one paragraph or two just talking about partnership working as if that was enough. We talk about discussions and negotiations but none of that that was in there was anything that was discussed with the colleges, so that was a bit of a disappointment.

Deputy de Lisle: I think this goes beyond what happens in the classroom. It is about how we can help each other and how we operate among the whole education system, and I think people understand that. I do thank Deputy Fairclough. Deputy Queripel was talking about, 'Is this aspirational?' No, absolutely not. This is something that is making things happen much faster

because it is between individuals, between those at the coalface joining together and seeing the benefits. I would counter the belief that this is something that will use up resources. It is looking at things system-wide and having to have a working group and having to have officers present and having to have a whole number of representatives around a room creating a working group and a partnership agreement that will take the time.

What is being proposed in this amendment is a way of making things happen now. I think we all want that, so I would just ask Members to take that account, note that this is a very – it is the opposite of being prescriptive. I am frankly stunned by anybody who thought it was. That certainly was not the intention and certainly was not that of the colleges, so I do ask Members to support this amendment.

**The Bailiff:** Members of the States, it is now time to vote on Amendment 5, proposed by Deputy Soulsby, seconded by Deputy Le Tocq, and I will invite the Greffier to open the voting, please.

*There was a recorded vote.*

*Amendment 5.*

*Carried – Pour 21, Contre 14, Ne vote pas 2, Did not vote 2, Absent 2*

POUR	CONTRE	NE VOTE PAS	DID NOT VOTE	ABSENT
Burford, Yvonne	Blin, Chris	Brouard, Al	Aldwell, Sue	Inder, Neil
Bury, Tina	Cameron, Andy	De Sausmarez, Lindsay	Le Tissier, Chris	
Dyke, John	De Lisle, David			
Fairclough, Simon	Dudley-Owen, Andrea			
Falla, Steve	Ferbrache, Peter			
Gollop, John	Gabriel, Adrian			
Hill, Edward	Haskins, Sam			
Kazantseva-Miller, Sasha	Helyar, Mark			
Le Tocq, Jonathan	Mahoney, David			
Leadbeater, Marc	McKenna, Liam			
Matthews, Aidan	Murray, Bob			
Meerveld, Carl	Prow, Robert			
Moakes, Nick	Roffey, Peter			
Oliver, Victoria	Taylor, Andrew			
Parkinson, Charles				
Queripel, Lester				
Snowdon, Alexander				
Soulsby, Heidi				
St Pier, Gavin				
Trott, Lyndon				
Vermeulen, Simon				

**The Bailiff:** So in respect of Amendment 5, proposed by Deputy Soulsby, seconded by Deputy Le Tocq, voted in favour 21 Members, 14 Members voted against, 2 Members abstained, 3 Members did not take part in that vote, but I will declare it carried, which means that Proposition 4 has now been substituted.

We will move finally – at least for now – to Amendment 4, which is proposed by Deputy Dyke, if you wish to lay Amendment 4 now.

#### [Amendment 4](#)

*And to add the following Proposition:*

*“5. To direct the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture to present to the States no later than the end of the academic year 2025/2026 for implementation in 2027/28, a series or range of options to introduce a bursary or open access programme to Blanchelande College, Elizabeth College and The Ladies’ College (“the Colleges”) in secondary education for students in Years 7 to*



*13, allocated between the Colleges and subject to agreement with each College in respect of the number of pupils and admissions policy applicable to the funded places.*

*The range of options must include an option to provide financial assistance by way of a sliding scale of up to 100% of fees according to a means test based on family circumstances for at least 30 places per annum.*

*The range of options presented shall allow for variations of the total number of places to be funded, covering a range of revenue costs and the degree to which each option seeks to open access to the Colleges up to pupils from all backgrounds."*

**Deputy Dyke:** Yes, sir.

I seem to have the graveyard slot. *(Laughter)* I sense a certain ennui is developing, so if everyone could just concentrate for a little bit longer. I think we have an amendment here around which we could have 100% consensus. *(Laughter)* The gist of the amendment, I will just read the first part of the actual Proposition. It is:

To direct the Committee for Education, Sport & Culture to present to the States no later than the end of the academic year 2025/2026 [so that is September a year away] for implementation in 2027/28, a series or range of options to introduce a bursary or open access programme to Blanchelande College, Elizabeth College and The Ladies' College ("the Colleges") in secondary education for students in Years 7 to 13, allocated between the Colleges and subject to agreement with each College in respect of the number of pupils and admissions policy applicable to the funded places. The range of options must include an option to provide financial assistance by way of a sliding scale of up to 100% of fees according to a means test based on family circumstances for at least 30 places per annum. The range of options presented shall allow for variations of the total number of places to be funded, covering a range of revenue costs and the degree to which each option seeks to open access to the Colleges up to pupils from all backgrounds."

So the point of this is following from points I made earlier in the debates of the Assembly. It is to try to achieve more access for less well-off pupils to the colleges for parents who, at present, could not manage to pay the fees. I mean, we have heard how people going down to quite a low level of income are trying to do this, but there are people obviously who cannot do it at all.

These bursary schemes are open-access schemes and have been tried in various places across the planet. We had something similar earlier, but my Proposition here is that this should be slightly different. I will see if I can shorten it. The previous system, which covered 50 pupils a year between the colleges, operated along the 11-plus in a selective education system, which we no longer have. There is a certain animus against the 11-plus type arrangement, although not universal:

Means testing for bursary schemes is a mechanism where fees can be funded for students from a wide range of backgrounds. Factors including household income, expenditure, assets, the number of children in a household, loans, debts and financial commitments can be taken into account.

By doing so, we can allow students from non-privileged backgrounds access to the same education opportunities as those from privileged backgrounds. The Proposition contemplates – although again, this is not totally prescriptive, it leaves room for discussion – a sliding scale of means test so that the bursary for the open-access scheme would range from zero to the full fees, with the mid-point being half the fees, of course, depending on the precise way the sliding scale is organised.

The amendment does not specify how eligibility for places would be allocated in the event that there is an excess demand. We did not quite draft our paper right in that we suggested that some sort of academic selection was inevitable, which is not quite what we intended. The point is if you are applying to the colleges, then obviously they will have a level that they will find acceptable and all of this will be by negotiation, but the whole thing will be primarily by means testing.

If there is oversubscription, there are various ways of handling it. You could handle it on an academic test basis; you could handle it on a form of lottery basis; or you could handle it by increasing the numbers of places available to match the demand that comes forward. So that would be a matter in each case for Education to discuss with the colleges to come to an arrangement that works for everyone.

3335 Now, the subject of the filthy lucre inevitably comes up. The figure we have suggested is 30  
places per annum, so that will be roughly 10 per school, but not necessarily exactly that. In the first  
year there will be 30, and then as more years come in, you would go up to the seven years and then  
when has is fully gone through the system we would get to 210 places. If this were funded in such  
a way that everyone received the full tuition fees, the cost in the first year would be approximately  
3340 £450,000, going to £3.2 million in the seventh year. I am using a £15,000 per year fee scale for the  
colleges.

However, as I have said previously, what we are contemplating is that the average bursary, going  
from zero to the full bursary, would give an average of half of that if that is how the sliding scale is  
done, so that would reduce the cost by half, so in the first year it would be £225,000 and in the  
3345 seventh year and ongoing it would be £1.6 million, but there is a balancing item here. If we take the  
equivalent cost of educating 30 students, the full 210 pupils, when we get to year 7, using the figures  
from paragraph 8.12 of the policy paper, that figure, that balancing figure – and that is based on  
ESC's slightly questionable figures that we have all debated, 'Does it include capital, should it?' –  
even taking it at its lowest amount from the figures in the policy paper gives an offsetting figure of  
3350 £2,113,650, thus giving a net fiscal benefit to the States and the taxpayer of something like £500,000  
per annum.

Now, as I say, the figures from 8.12, people have questioned them either way, but those are the  
figures I have taken, so it should not be an additional cost to the States. On the basis of those  
figures, we get a saving, fortunately, otherwise I would have been in trouble on this. So that is the  
3355 proposal. It is relatively straightforward. The details would be fine-tuned by discussion with the  
schools. The precise numbers would have to be settled by discussion with the schools. The precise  
admission arrangements, entry level, intellectual entry level and all of that, would be by discussion  
with the schools. This basically sets out a framework, which I hope sets a useful direction.

The colleges, in their communication to us, have said that they would be pleased to discuss this.  
3360 Obviously they have not committed themselves, so discussion is necessary. We would also need to  
work out how these places relate to the grant that we have just been discussing and how they  
interrelate and what we deal with at the edges, so there is another fiscal point that we will need to  
be thinking about. But we have all talked about this a lot, and I know Education are keen on social  
mobility. This concept comes from all directions, I think, of the Chamber in terms of a principle that  
3365 we can adhere to. Social mobility is a good thing, so people from different wealth classes working  
together. As I say, I was from a grammar school and we had some of the richest people in Poole  
there and some of the people, like me, from the much less wealthy areas. We all got on together  
and it made the whole thing interesting.

What we are doing, we are giving more people choice as to how they educate their children,  
3370 which I think is a very good thing generally, and we have discussed this at length, so I will not go  
on too long. The other issue that has raised its head in this debate is demographics and the sliding  
numbers of pupils we are seeing in our schools overall. It is not something we have really addressed  
seriously. It has been raised and people obviously have seriously noted it, but we have not  
addressed it, but it does seem to be happening and it does seem that within the next few years we  
3375 are going to see diminishing numbers coming through into our secondary schools.

This mechanism, in consultation and in partnership with the colleges – it is another aspect of the  
partnership – this arrangement gives a sort of safety valve that would allow us to put more people  
into the colleges and possibly obviate the need for that final secondary school to be rebuilt when  
La Mare de Carteret is demolished, which is likely to be quite a few years down the line, so that  
3380 potentially is a saving of £100 million. I do not know how much it is going to cost us to build a  
school. So potentially a big saving, and in the meantime a flexible mechanism to handle how we lay  
off our children between the schools. For all those reasons, I think that we should all agree that this  
is a very good Proposition and vote for it.

Thank you.

3385 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Matthews, do you formally second Amendment 4?

**Deputy Matthews:** Yes, sir, and I reserve my right to speak.

3390 **Deputy Gabriel:** 24(6), please, sir.

**The Bailiff:** I am satisfied, unless the Comptroller tells me differently, that inserting an additional Proposition goes further than the original Propositions. You are nodding, Mr Comptroller.

3395 **The Comptroller:** Sir, I am nodding. It seems to me it goes further.

**The Bailiff:** Yes, so it goes further than the original Propositions. Do you wish me to put a motion that it be/not be debated?

3400 **Deputy Matthews:** Yes, please, sir.

**The Bailiff:** The motion is that Amendment 4 be not debated. Those in favour; those against.

*Some Members voted Pour, others voted Contre*

3405 **Deputy Matthews:** A recorded vote, please, sir.

**The Bailiff:** We might have to have a recorded vote on that. I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on the motion pursuant to Rule 24(6) that there be no debate on the amendment.

3410 *There was a recorded vote.*

*Carried – Pour 16, Contre 15, Ne vote pas 0, Did not vote 9, Absent 1*

POUR	CONTRE	NE VOTE PAS	DID NOT VOTE	ABSENT
Bury, Tina	Blin, Chris	None	Aldwell, Sue	Inder, Neil
Cameron, Andy	Brouard, Al		Burford, Yvonne	
De Sausmarez, Lindsay	De Lisle, David		Haskins, Sam	
Dudley-Owen, Andrea	Dyke, John		Le Tissier, Chris	
Falla, Steve	Fairclough, Simon		Le Tocq, Jonathan	
Gabriel, Adrian	Ferbrache, Peter		Mahoney, David	
Hill, Edward	Gollop, John		Meerveld, Carl	
Kazantseva-Miller, Sasha	Helyar, Mark		Trott, Lyndon	
Leadbeater, Marc	Matthews, Aidan			
McKenna, Liam	Moakes, Nick			
Murray, Bob	Oliver, Victoria			
Prow, Robert	Parkinson, Charles			
Roffey, Peter	Queripel, Lester			
Snowdon, Alexander	Soulsby, Heidi			
St Pier, Gavin	Vermeulen, Simon			
Taylor, Andrew				

3415 **The Bailiff:** So on the motion as to whether there should be no debate on Amendment 4 proposed by Deputy Dyke, seconded by Deputy Matthews, there voted in favour 16 Members, 15 Members voted against, no Member abstained, 9 Members were not present at the vote and therefore I would declare it carried, so there will be no debate on Amendment 4, which means that

3420 we move into general debate.

I simply remind Members that we have Proposition 1, which comes from Amendment 1, we have original Proposition 3 and we have substituted Proposition 4, which comes from Amendment 5, so there are three Propositions for you to debate.

Deputy Moakes, do you wish to speak?

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**Deputy Moakes:** *[Inaudible 5.01.01]*

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**The Bailiff:** Okay. Before anyone does anything like declaring, because in theory the declaration should have come on the amendments and various people did make declarations on the amendments, but if we want to have a sweep-up of those who need to make a declaration. But before I do that, can I just remind Members that when the States are in session, Members should not have any communication with a person in the public gallery? I have seen one Member at least talking to people in the public gallery, which should not have happened.

3435

So anyone for a declaration before we get to the vote? Anyone want to speak in debate, we will take people in debate. Okay.

**Deputy Falla:** Sorry, sir, just to say that I am a former director of Elizabeth College.

3440

**The Bailiff:** Yes. I am not sure that actually means a special direct interest, but never mind.

**Deputy de Lisle:** *[Inaudible 5.02.13]*

**The Bailiff:** Yes. Deputy Blin.

3445

**Deputy Blin:** *[Inaudible 5.02.23]*

**The Bailiff:** Anyone else? Is there anyone here –

3450

**Deputy McKenna:** Sorry, sir, is that a declaration to say if your children are at the colleges, yes?

**The Bailiff:** Yes.

3455

**Deputy McKenna:** Okay. I declare my son, Conor, at college, Orla at Blanchelande and Erin at Ladies' College.

**Several Members:** *[Inaudible 5.02.52]*

**The Bailiff:** No. All right, does anyone want to speak in general debate or am I going to turn to the President to reply to no debate?

3460

Okay, Deputy Taylor.

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**Deputy Taylor:** Probably I am going to be the only person to speak here, sir, and I will be completely honest, I have not finished writing my notes (*Laughter*) so I was riding on there being a bit more that I could either pick up on or comment to. I can see eyes rolling already, but do not worry, because have completed my notes, it will not be too long a speech. But really I want to preface any comments in this speech by stating that I fully respect any parent or grandparent who prioritise, or in some cases do not even need to prioritise, funding their child's education in a private setting over going to the state offering. I want to make absolutely clear I welcome the offering of a private education on the Island.

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The principal issue I have had during these debates and in reading the policy letter is some of the comments or claims that have been put down and made and then some of them that are then repeated in the email commentary that we have received, and I just want to comment on those which will give an indication of why I intend to vote the way I will vote.

3475

Now, the biggest bugbear for me, sir, has been the claim that the colleges educate 30% of the secondary children for 3% of the budget, the Education budget. I just do not believe that is worded factually. I will set out how I came to that conclusion, sir, because I looked at the average price per

pupil across the three schools, which comes in at £17,000 average, sorry, and against 1,256 pupils educated at £17,000 comes to just under £21.4 million. Now, Deputy Dudley-Owen told us earlier on in debates that the secondary education part of Education's budget is around about £21 million. Therefore, I think the more accurate statement would be the cost of educating 30% of the Island's secondary pupils in the private sector is broadly the same as educating 70% of the Island's secondary pupils in the secondary sector. I think that is a more accurate reflection of the situation.

In saying that, I do not object to the college fees being what they are, if people are prepared to pay and they are satisfied with the education that their children receive as a result of attending those schools; I think that is great. But I just do not think it is fair to portray that the cost is just 3% of the total budget. I think that is what is being pushed quite heavily.

The second bit, the second issue I have, I accept that we have received lots of emails regarding parents who have children, or grandparents, who say that if the fees went up slightly they would not be able to afford it. I fully accept there are lots of people who are on that margin. It is a point that has been raised previously in debate. There will always be people on that cut-off, that threshold. Even if the fees came down so the total cost payable was £10,000 a year and there were more pupils in the private sector, there would still be people who could email and say, 'Well, if it goes up a thousand, we would not be able to afford it.' That is just a simple principle that will apply always and I do not think there is really any escaping that. But what I did not like, sir, was in the, I think it is, first appendix, paragraph 4.2.3, which is the letter that came from the three colleges jointly, where they stated, it is sub-paragraph (d), that they do not believe there is elasticity in the pricing.

Now, I do not think it would be unreasonable to properly poll and do some economic analysis on what the maximum pricing that their students or their parents, whoever the benefactor is, could afford. Because, as is evidenced in the policy letter, the education fees that are being charged have exceeded inflation over a long period of time. Deputy Trott is not in the Assembly at the moment, but this argument about where the fees exceed the wage in inflation terms, that situation has been occurring for some time, but the numbers have been increasing.

I am not going to give way to the Deputy Vermeulen, because he will have an opportunity – I know I am not the only one that seems to want to speak in general debate, but Deputy Vermeulen will get a chance. My heart rate is increasing. (*Laughter*)

I think the colleges who have come forward are justified. I fully accept that there are people on this threshold and the people who have written to us saying that they could not afford this fee increase. I am not undermining that position and I respect that, that might have an impact on them, but I think if the colleges are putting forward this justification – and it has got to be noted they were quite critical of Education, Sport & Culture for being a bit light on detail. There are some claims that are made on the other side, which I think are not fully substantiated, and that they do not believe there is elasticity in their pricing, I do not believe there is evidence, whereas actually the evidence shows that their pricing has increased at a greater rate than inflation over the years.

The next point that I do have a bit of an issue with is this comparison with similar jurisdictions and the comparison with similar jurisdictions shows that the colleges are charging considerably less than those comparative jurisdictions, but then – and it is prefaced about similar cost-of-living jurisdictions – it goes on to say that we cannot really compare with those jurisdictions because we have got a high cost of living in Guernsey. I cannot really square that. I mean, I fully accept, again, if they want to keep the prices low so it encourages many people in, that is great, but it needs to be accepted that in comparative jurisdictions, there is a higher price to pay. If there is a demand – which we can clearly see there is – for a service, then it seems sensible that the price is charged accordingly.

Where to next? It is a shame Deputy Vermeulen has gone because this point is one of the points he might like to pick up on, but the colleges tell us, again in 4.23, that there is no fat on the bone. It is such a lean operation that there is no way of trimming anything. But I do not feel informed enough, sir, to know whether that is the case. We often hear in this Assembly that there is always savings to be made. There is always a bit of fat that can be trimmed. I find it strange that there is no savings that could be made because if we look at the demographics, it is a fact that there will be

less students going through all of our schools collectively in the very near future. So it is entirely likely that the revenue of these institutions will drop. If they are not prepared for that, which it does not sound like they are, there is no fat to be trimmed at this time, how will they deal with that? It is a very real – I say business risk in a loose term – risk that we are all facing.

Now it does also tell us, and maybe this is a criticism of Education, Sport & Culture, but we learnt from the policy letter that Jersey operate their ‘private’ schools at a significantly lower cost than Guernsey. It would have been nice to see a breakdown, if possible, of the fees charged and what proportion of that was the Government subsidy, because that in itself would have been a good indicator of where there could have been savings to be made by the colleges.

If it was a case that the colleges could outsource some of their fixed costs to Government and therefore reduce their overheads and then be more profitable, that might, I think, have been something we could have learnt from having a better understanding of the situation in Jersey, because it is quite clear that Jersey is undercutting us in the private sector quite significantly. So perhaps we could learn something there on how they are doing it.

Another point I really did not like, and it has been very much borne out in the emails that we have received is 4.23(e), where the colleges told us that many parents and wider family units are, due to the increase in cost of living, already going to extreme measures to pay fees. Now, that is a bit of an alarm bell for me. There is foregoing a holiday in a year and there is not having a manicure. But to take extreme measures, I mean that is quite significant, what are the extreme measures? Is this people are not putting food on their children’s tables? I generally do not know, but it was something that was quite the claim to actually go into the letter from colleges, and I would have been interested to learn a little bit more about that.

I suppose, finally, it is another one – I am glad Deputy Trott is here now – where I feel I have to comment because it is something on my mind, but again it is an area that I confess I am not particularly clued up on, but it is this discussion about the capital costs. I fully accept the arguments that have come forward from Deputy Trott that there is a cost of capital. But I do not fully understand how the colleges deal with capital. I am just going to read from an article in the *Guernsey Press* relating to the purchase of Perrot Court. The *Guernsey Press* tells us:

The Elizabeth College Foundation has raised the funds to purchase the building by the chance of a lifetime appeal, which has been running since early last year. Old Elizabethans, parents of current and former students, staff and many other members of the wider Elizabeth College community supported the appeal, which has now raised over £2.2 million.

We also know there was a legacy from former advocate Roger Perrot. That is great. I think, as a community, that is something that we should be collectively incredibly proud of. That there are people out there, irrespective of anyone’s views on where grant funding should go, that is quite an achievement for an institution to raise those sums of money. But I do not know how that is dealt with in terms of capital; where is that recorded? How is it factored in? Is interest paid on those funds? I do not get how that is then factored into the cost of educating in the college. If it is money that is raised by charity, it does not theoretically need to be repaid. It is something that the colleges, as I said, were quite critical on establishing the cost of educating in the state system. But I do not feel it is quite clear to understand the full cost of educating in the private system. It is great there have been benefactors, but I think, as Deputy Dudley-Owen called out for, if there were some benefactors that left some money for the state schools, think what we could do there as well, sir.

I suppose in closing, I do not have a summary but I think I have sufficiently aired my principal concerns. I will not be supporting the Proposition 1, this amendment. I would have liked to have seen the funding at least reduced as a bare minimum. The St Pier amendment does not provide that and I am not prepared to support that Proposition but I will with the others.

Thank you, everyone, for an interesting debate. I thoroughly enjoyed reading the policy letter, it was informing.

Yes, thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Prow.

3580 **Deputy Prow:** Thank you, sir.

I rise very, very briefly. Just for *Hansard*, I inadvertently forgot to thank Deputy Brouard for seconding Amendment 7. I want to place that on *Hansard*. We discussed it at a very late stage in the proceedings, and I am actually glad that the question of savings, which is a real issue and something actually mentioned just now by Deputy Taylor, is a real issue to this Island, so I am glad that we did give the opportunity.

3585 But for the avoidance of doubt, I do support maintaining financial support paid by the States to the colleges.

Thank you, sir.

3590 **The Bailiff:** Deputy de Lisle.

**Deputy de Lisle:** Thank you, sir.

3595 Sir, I made the point earlier that people are choosing at great cost to themselves to put their children in private education because the state system is not working for their children. Now people have been at pains to write to Deputies and the Department, basically with critical comments and other comments with regard to the performance of not only the colleges but also the state schools. I ask that the Department and the Committee take note of the criticisms brought out in the emails that everyone has received and address them.

3600 The frustration coming to fore in the 200 or so emails sent by the public to Deputies, I am talking about in the last few days. Please do not deny the people. This is an opportunity to learn and engage. The system needs to change accordingly. So can I have assurances, please, from the President that she will kindly have her Department officers consider the criticism given by the public and make changes accordingly where relevant to improvement?

Thank you, sir.

3605 **Deputy Kazantseva-Miller:** 26(1), please.

**The Bailiff:** Can I invite those Members who wish to speak in general debate to stand in their places? Is it still your wish, Deputy Kazantseva-Miller, that I put a motion?

3610 **Deputy Kazantseva-Miller:** No, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Queripel.

3615 **Deputy Queripel:** Sir, thank you.

Sir, every time we discuss anything to do with education, I am reminded of the song. It was a multi-million seller back in 1979 for Pink Floyd entitled 'Brick in the Wall'. It is a song that contains the immortal line.

We don't need no education. We don't need no thought control.

3620 Which you stated, sir, in the *Guernsey Press* on 11th January is one of your favourite tunes. You also said in that article, sir, that you attended a Rush concert at Hammersmith Odeon in 1980. Well, sir, I was at the same concert, so we share the same excellent tastes.

3625 **The Bailiff:** And the relevance of this to the debate? *(Laughter)*

**Deputy Queripel:** Sir, none of that bears any relation to this debate, I just wanted to get it in.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Ferbrache.

3630

**Deputy Ferbrache:** Sir, my favourite song is 'Killing me Softly' but I do not think in this debate we want to kill anybody softly or harshly or whatever we are. But in relation to where we are, the only reason I am raising this is because of Deputy de Lisle's comments. And I do not agree with them. I am sure the state system is not perfect, but it is very good. I think the closing thing in relation to this debate is we have had – I am going to vote for all three Propositions that are currently standing. Even though I voted against the Soulsby amendment, it has been passed and I see the logic in it. But the purpose in relation to where we are is that, as I said in a speech I made yesterday, three of my grandchildren are at the state schools, they are all different schools, the education they get from those schools at the primary and secondary level is truly excellent. It could not be better.

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3640

I am sure there are problems in the state sector. There are problems in the private sector. What the state sector has to do is to deal with children of all abilities, and with sometimes massive social problems. That takes lots of resources, so I commend our education system. Of course it is not perfect, it never will be, it needs a lot more work.

3645

I finish where I started, or nearly started, when I made my speech, is that I do commend the efforts of the Education Committee. They were left with a difficult set of cards. They have dealt with them very well. They have still got a lot of work to do but let us end this debate, not necessarily on my words, saying we are united going forward in the best interests of our children.

**A Member:** Hear, hear.

3650

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Aldwell.

**Deputy Aldwell:** Thank you, sir.

3655

I just wanted to say that I am pleased that we have found a solution. That is what the Committee wanted. We wanted a solution and the Assembly will have decided. But I wanted to make the point, once again, we were directed to bring the college grants to the Assembly in 2017 and we were directed to make savings from this Assembly in November 2024 via grants. What has been made very clear to me is that the next Assembly will need to raise funds to invest in education right across Guernsey. I will support obviously all of the Propositions. It is what the Assembly has agreed to do and of course I will support it.

3660

Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Meerveld.

3665

**Deputy Meerveld:** Thank you, sir.

I have a very quick declaration of interest in that I have two sons who are at Elizabeth College, although I doubt any decisions today would have much effect as they will be moving on from there within about 18 months. It is also worth mentioning, I am actually a product of the public system. I went to Hope Capelle's and then St Sampson's School, and finally did some A-levels at Grammar School. But I think the Assembly has come to a good place on this, and as Deputy Aldwell has said, I will be supporting all the Propositions as proposed.

3670

Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** I now invite the President, Deputy Leadbeater?

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**Deputy Leadbeater:** Thank you, sir.

I am going to be really brief. It was just picking up on Deputy Ferbrache's point, because I did have quite a long speech for general debate, but I can see everyone is tired and it is coming towards the end of the day, so I will just spare everybody my words.

3680

But just one point. A lot of the correspondence we have had, I mean, you can put it into different categories. Some of it was hyperbole or whatever, but there was some that concerned me because



we have got parents of students in the primary sector that have not experienced our state secondary school sector, but they have heard bad stuff about it. It is scaring these people.

3685 Some of the stuff I read, there was one guy, I felt so sorry for him because he could not afford to send his children into the private colleges but he felt compelled that he had to. So he was going to do everything he can and get a second job, blah, blah, blah, to be able to do what he can. I think it is terrible that we are putting parents in this position. We have to stop this narrative that our secondary education provision is that bad, because it is not. As Deputy Ferbrache pointed out, we have got excellent special schools.

3690 My son was a product right the way through from Mont Varouf through to Le Rondin through to Le Murier. Excellent. I cannot fault the education and everything that was offered to him right the way through that time. There are a lot of things that we do really well. So I would not like people out there to think that our education system is as bad as some people say, because it certainly is not.

3695 I would like people to spin this narrative around and stop attacking our system that we have now. Clearly there are some improvements that need to be made. I think this is all part of the process because we have come out of a selective education system into a comprehensive system. We are going through the motions as this debate is part of those motions. We still have a long way to go. But let us spin this narrative around and try and support these schools rather than to do the opposite.

3700 Thank you.

**A Member:** Hear, hear.

3705 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Gollop.

**Deputy Gollop:** I have got one minute to speak. I will support all of the amended Propositions. But what I would like to say to the people gathered here and the wider audience is just because I think it is a wise investment to support the colleges, you get a lot back, it does not mean to say we should not support, as Deputy Leadbeater said, the state system. I would wish to see, at the earliest possible opportunity, more work done on development of an early year strategy, needs-driven support, early intervention and early help, wraparound care co-ordination, and even hot lunchtime meals in primary schools. I think those initiatives matter and that will be a way of actually looking at how we can make efficiencies from a better budget.

3715 **Deputy Oliver:** 26(1), sir.

**The Bailiff:** Can I invite those Members who wish to speak in general debate to stand in their places. In that case I will turn to the President, Deputy Dudley-Owen, to reply to the debate.

3720 **Deputy Dudley-Owen:** Thank you, sir.

3725 Thank you to everyone in the Chamber for contributions, and for the most part it has been cordial. We have got a little bit tetchy at times, myself included, and I do apologise if I in fact had to. I apologised to the Deputy Vermeulen, we shook hands, we are still friends I hope. But sometimes in these debates, not particularly around the subject we were talking about, frustrations bubble up from previous debates so I can say that we have carefully aired all the views and issues, I think, and got to a particular consensus position that the States is willing to agree on.

3730 It was always going to be the case that the Committee was going to have to come back to this Chamber for reasons that we have articulated and, therefore, I just hope that the next Committee, the next iteration of this Committee, will be paying close heed to the words spoken by Members in this Chamber because I have no doubt that they will be coming back to the next Assembly and they will be seeking funding for investment in education across the board, because it is absolutely vital. We cannot save our way to success. We have to invest our way to success. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.)

We have to invest in the pipeline of young people coming through. We have to invest in supporting our families to have more children, to give them the confidence that this is the Island that they want to stay in, to retain –to support our indigenous Islanders and also to make it attractive for people who come and work here.

We are simply not doing enough at the moment; simply not doing enough. Just to address the point that Deputy de Lisle made, absolutely, of course I can assure Deputy de Lisle that we will consider any criticism of any of the services that are in the mandate of Education, Sport & Culture, in actual fact of any of the Committees where they touch our mandate, and seek to remedy those. Are they just a particular complaint that has arisen or is actually that an indication of a policy issue, which actually is why the governing boards have been absolutely vital in informing us in an evidence-based way on our policy decisions within Committee.

It is the picture of an ever-improving education sector, the state sector, that we have been painting, and it is going well. Yes, there are still pockets where we need more resourcing and more support, but it is a generally positive trajectory and that is proved by our Education Strategy Report that we released earlier in the year. I am really thrilled to hear Deputy Ferbrache and Deputy Leadbeater singing the praises of the state sector and others as well. I wish that that would be the resounding view of some of our media as well. We really do ourselves down and go to PRC with commentary, which is less than positive.

Of course, you are never going to get everything right. But where we are dealing with 9,000 children and young people, we have got 1,000 staff members, plus those in the colleges, there is always going to be something that is not quite right. We are dealing with humans here. We are complex individuals. But there definitely needs to be a resounding support for the education system going forward.

I am grateful to those who have recognised the great work. Yes, I just cannot really say more on the States' maintained sector or the colleges, other than to say that we are left with a suite of proposals now which look different to what we entered the Chamber with. It is the mark of that consensus. I will admit to finding it difficult to support the new Proposition 1, but I will support it, because I do not want to leave the colleges without funding. I go into this support with my eyes absolutely wide open and I ask Members who are supporting it to acknowledge the policy conflict that we are baking in here. I am only supporting this because it is clear that the financial viability of our colleges is in jeopardy otherwise. But we are continuing to support a selective system and my remedy to that is for the colleges to remove their selection process.

I hope that that will be considered by the colleges because that is the fairest way forward and that is the way that this Assembly acknowledges that the financial viability of important educational institutions is what we are supporting here but actually we should not be countenancing the selective criteria that they apply on their admissions.

So without further ado, I will leave Members to make their votes.  
Thank you sir.

**The Bailiff:** Well, Members of the States, there are three Propositions, does any Member wish to vote differently in respect of any of them?

**Deputy Roffey:** I would like to vote differently on Proposition 1.

**A Member:** Proposition 1, I do not know if that is what Deputy Roffey said.

**The Bailiff:** We might just take the three Propositions discreetly each time then, just out of an abundance of caution.

So just Proposition 1, which comes from the successful Amendment 1 and I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on Proposition 1, please.

*There was a recorded vote.*

*Proposition 1.*

*Carried – Pour 35, Contre 2, Ne vote pas 1, Did not vote 1, Absent 1*

3790

<b>POUR</b>	<b>CONTRE</b>	<b>NE VOTE PAS</b>	<b>DID NOT VOTE</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>
Aldwell, Sue	Bury, Tina	Roffey, Peter	Le Tissier, Chris	Inder, Neil
Blin, Chris	Taylor, Andrew			
Brouard, Al				
Burford, Yvonne				
Cameron, Andy				
De Lisle, David				
De Sausmarez, Lindsay				
Dudley-Owen, Andrea				
Dyke, John				
Fairclough, Simon				
Falla, Steve				
Ferbrache, Peter				
Gabriel, Adrian				
Gollop, John				
Haskins, Sam				
Helyar, Mark				
Hill, Edward				
Kazantseva-Miller, Sasha				
Le Tocq, Jonathan				
Leadbeater, Marc				
Mahoney, David				
Matthews, Aidan				
McKenna, Liam				
Meerveld, Carl				
Moakes, Nick				
Murray, Bob				
Oliver, Victoria				
Parkinson, Charles				
Prow, Robert				
Queripel, Lester				
Snowdon, Alexander				
Soulsby, Heidi				
St Pier, Gavin				
Trott, Lyndon				
Vermeulen, Simon				

**The Bailiff:** In respect of Proposition 1, they voted: in favour of 35 Members, 2 Members voted against, 1 Member abstained and 2 Members did not participate in that vote and therefore I would declare Proposition 1 carried.

3795

Now Proposition 3, which you might see come up as 2, depending on what comes up. Yes, it is come up as Proposition 2, but that is the original Proposition 3, and I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on that Proposition.

*There was a recorded vote.*

3800

*Proposition 3.*

*Carried – Pour 38, Contre 0, Ne vote pas 0, Did not vote 1, Absent 1*

<b>POUR</b>	<b>CONTRE</b>	<b>NE VOTE PAS</b>	<b>DID NOT VOTE</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>
Aldwell, Sue	None	None	Le Tissier, Chris	Inder, Neil
Blin, Chris				
Brouard, Al				
Burford, Yvonne				
Bury, Tina				
Cameron, Andy				

De Lisle, David  
 De Sausmarez, Lindsay  
 Dudley-Owen, Andrea  
 Dyke, John  
 Fairclough, Simon  
 Falla, Steve  
 Ferbrache, Peter  
 Gabriel, Adrian  
 Gollop, John  
 Haskins, Sam  
 Helyar, Mark  
 Hill, Edward  
 Kazantseva-Miller, Sasha  
 Le Tocq, Jonathan  
 Leadbeater, Marc  
 Mahoney, David  
 Matthews, Aidan  
 McKenna, Liam  
 Meerveld, Carl  
 Moakes, Nick  
 Murray, Bob  
 Oliver, Victoria  
 Parkinson, Charles  
 Prow, Robert  
 Queripel, Lester  
 Roffey, Peter  
 Snowdon, Alexander  
 Soulsby, Heidi  
 St Pier, Gavin  
 Taylor, Andrew  
 Trott, Lyndon  
 Vermeulen, Simon

3805        **The Bailiff:** So, in respect of original Proposition 3, they voted: in favour of 38 Members, no Member voted against, no Member abstained, 2 Members did not participate, therefore I declare Proposition 3 as it was carried.

The last Proposition, which derives from the substitution by Amendment 5. Again, I will invite the Greffier to open the voting on that Proposition, which is Proposition 4.

3810

*There was a recorded vote.*

*Proposition 4.*

*Carried – Pour 33, Contre 2, Ne vote pas 3, Did not vote 1, Absent 1*

3815

<b>POUR</b>	<b>CONTRE</b>	<b>NE VOTE PAS</b>	<b>DID NOT VOTE</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>
Brouard, Al	Blin, Chris	Aldwell, Sue	Le Tissier, Chris	Inder, Neil
Bury, Tina	De Lisle, David	Burford, Yvonne		
Cameron, Andy		De Sausmarez, Lindsay		
Dudley-Owen, Andrea				
Dyke, John				
Fairclough, Simon				
Falla, Steve				
Ferbrache, Peter				
Gabriel, Adrian				
Gollop, John				
Haskins, Sam				
Helyar, Mark				
Hill, Edward				
Kazantseva-Miller, Sasha				
Le Tocq, Jonathan				
Leadbeater, Marc				
Mahoney, David				

Matthews, Aidan  
McKenna, Liam  
Meerveld, Carl  
Moakes, Nick  
Murray, Bob  
Oliver, Victoria  
Parkinson, Charles  
Prow, Robert  
Queripel, Lester  
Roffey, Peter  
Snowdon, Alexander  
Soulsby, Heidi  
St Pier, Gavin  
Taylor, Andrew  
Trott, Lyndon  
Vermeulen, Simon

**The Bailiff:** In respect of substituted Proposition 4, they voted in favour 33 Members, 2 Members voted against, 3 Members abstained, 2 Members did not participate in that vote. Therefore I would declare Proposition 4 as substituted, also duly carried.

3820

We will now adjourn until 9.30 in the morning.

*The Assembly adjourned at 5.37 p.m*