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**TEACHERS, SCHOLARSHIPS**  
**3 June 2004**

**Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders):** Will the Minister for Education and Children's Services advise why the government has reduced the number of country teaching scholarships to 78 compared with 95 last year? Last year 25 young school leavers and other people studying to become teachers from my electorate of Flinders were granted scholarships. This year we have been able to secure only 11 scholarships.

**The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH (Minister for Education and Children's Services):** I thank the member for Penfold for her question. The issue of finding suitably qualified staff for country positions is a very important and deeply vexed one. One of the issues that we have noticed is recruitment, and we are actively recruiting through this scholarship program, but we have also recognised another problem, because we have realised that one of the significant issues in country schools is retention as well. So, we are now moving to a more intense mentoring, induction and support mechanism by which those young people who are trained can stay in the profession. So, whilst the numbers might fluctuate from year to year, we are hoping that with a higher retention rate there will be more teachers on the ground, in the schools, where she would want them to be.

**TEACHERS, SCHOLARSHIPS**  
**21 October 2002**

**Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders):** Can the Minister for Education and Children's Services advise the house when the application forms will be available for the teacher scholarships? I have received a number of inquiries about these scholarships, which were announced some months ago.

**The Hon. P.L. WHITE (Minister for Education and Children's Services):** I thank the honourable member very much for the opportunity to speak about this very important initiative that was funded in the recent state budget. These country student teacher grants are aimed at students who intend to travel to the city to train as teachers. Of course, that is the only mechanism by which they can gain that training, by travelling to the city. These scholarships of up to \$10 000 each can be used towards HECS fees, accommodation expenses, materials and other expenses that are naturally incurred by students when they come to train as teachers.

Also, those recipients who successfully complete their studies will be guaranteed a placement in a country school. The reasoning behind that is that those students will be most likely to be attracted to country teaching and to be retained in our country schools, which, of course, are where many of our most difficult to staff schools are. These will be put in place for the 2003 school year. We will be making an announcement in coming weeks. Currently a lot of students are concentrating on exams. As they turn their attention to next year's pursuits details of the program will be made public then.