



**OFFICIAL REPORT**

**OF THE**

**STATES OF DELIBERATION**

**OF THE**

**ISLAND OF GUERNSEY**

**HANSARD**

**Royal Court House, Guernsey, Wednesday, 9th March 2016**

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**The Clerk to the States of Deliberation**

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**Absent at the Evocation**

Miss M. M. E. Pullum, Q.C. (H.M. Comptroller)

Deputy E. G. Bebb (*relevé à 10h 04*)

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# States of Deliberation

*The States met at 9.30 a.m.*

[THE BAILIFF *in the Chair*]

## PRAYERS

*The Greffier*

## EVOCATION

# Billet d'État VII

## EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

### I. The Future Structure of Secondary and Post-16 Education – Debate continued

5 **The Senior Deputy Greffier:** Billet d'État VII – Article I – the continuation of the debate.

**The Bailiff:** We continue debate on Deputy St Pier and Deputy Perrot's amendment smart table on an A2.

Deputy Conder and then Deputy Duquemin.

10

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

When I joined the Education Committee in 2012 my knowledge of secondary education was very limited and was confined to seeing my daughters through their schooling, and the almost six years I served as a board member of Elizabeth College.

15

With the exception of Deputy Sherbourne, I suspect my lack of knowledge was shared by most of my colleagues. That is how our system of Government works. That experience is, I suspect, common to most of our Government Committees.

20

Sir, I had very few, if any, pre-conceived notions about secondary education. I and my colleagues had to learn and mould ourselves into a team. That learning and team building involved advice from our excellent officers, visiting schools, sitting on school committees, meeting with educational specialists, visiting schools in the UK and undertaking research, and the many other influences that impact upon us. That took time as did the building of the five of us into a team. Our views were varied, not set in stone and on many occasions at odds with each other. I would suggest colleagues that knowledge-gathering and team-building will apply to your next Education Committee, and my advice to them would be not to expect to achieve more than a limited number of objectives during their term, and expect them to be realised near to the end of their term of office, as has happened to us.

25

30 What I can say, sir, is that in respect of the 11-plus our views were at the start of our joining together, as diverse and as wide apart as the views in this Chamber today. Why would they be otherwise? We were a group of virtual strangers brought together by you, our colleagues, to develop and oversee Education on your behalf for four years.

35 Sir, I would readily acknowledge that we were damaged and embarrassed by what was, in my opinion, a very inappropriate and out of context challenge by the Chairman of a public meeting we all attended early in our term when out of the blue, completely out of context and with no prior warning, we were suddenly instructed by that Chairman to declaim yes or no to whether we supported the Eleven-plus or not. Only our Minister had the presence of mind and the experience, to refuse to answer, the rest of us were trapped into response we had neither prepared for nor thought through. The negative answers we gave them, in our naivety and political innocence, have sat like a millstone round our necks for most of our term.

40 Sir, I quite understand why Deputy Perrot said last night that he knew the views of the board before they went into consultation and if it was based upon that event, I quite understand it. But I would reassure him and this Assembly, that prior to going to the consultation we are now discussing, the majority of the board had no fixed views and the views that developed were a product of the consultation and the very lengthy debates and discussions we had when we received the feedback.

45 Sir, our experience in that public meeting I hope will be a lesson to our successors. I can say that it has only been through the experience over these three or four years and at the end of this process, that I have come to a conclusion that has compelled me now to recognise that the 11-plus is not fit for purpose. It has been the dialogue, research and the contact with our professionals and students that has drawn me to that conclusion. As I said, I most certainly did not enter the stakeholder consultation, or indeed my term of office, with a closed mind. As my colleagues who have sat round the Education board table would attest, as I would equally for them.

55 Sir, my conversion in respect of the 11-plus does not mean I reject selection with a small 's' out of hand. I think all of us in this debate have become too fixated on the word 'selection', to the extent it becomes a semantic debate as to just what the word means. We are selective for football teams, we select our partners, or we are selected, we select what clothes to wear, what teams to support. However, what is wrong and unfair, is to *be* selected on the basis of some arbitrary, out of date, unscientific series of tests, which have no veracity in terms of long term predictions, and label or ghettoise those who are selected on the wrong side of the line. Whether those so selected are perceived, or perceive themselves, as failures even if that epithet only applies to a minority of those so selected, has implications for them, their teachers, and society as a whole, and we and they struggle with the consequence of labelling some of our young people early in the second decade of their lives. That toxic categorising potentially leaves some members of our community with the label that they will carry, and sadly in some cases, will live *down* to for many years to come.

65 Sir, for those for whom selection, however they define it, is important, may I draw their attention to page 1518 of the Billet. In paragraph 7.20 we say:

Selection for these Key Stage 4 pathways would be based upon individual aptitude, ability, past performance, potential and student preference. Final choice of pathway will be based upon guided and informed discussion between school staff, students, parents/carers along with impartial guidance from Careers Guernsey ... and overseen by the school senior management team.

70 That is not 14-Plus, but for those for whom the word 'selection' is important, I would draw your attention to that. Because it is not simply a free-for-all; students *will* be guided on the basis of their aptitude, performance and abilities and will be helped to make the right choices. Surely that is better than an arbitrary decision based upon a series of tests which have very little scientific credibility anymore.

75 Sir, I am a product of the 11-plus, as is my wife. The 11-plus as a vehicle for social mobility worked for both of us – the child of a farm labourer in one case and a 1950's single family in the other, we both passed the 11-plus, albeit through the borderline route. We both went to a co-educational grammar boarding school, where we happened to be in the same class. In both our cases neither of us benefited from coaching, it did not really exist in the 1950's. Neither of us benefited from a primary school which had a long tradition of sending its children to grammar school, indeed in my wife's case she was the first child from her primary school ever to get to

80 grammar school. But the 11-plus route to grammar school worked for us and opened doors to university and good careers, and a lifestyle in the previous generation could never have aspired to. Therefore, sir, I ask that I am not labelled as rabidly anti-selection. Indeed I celebrate and wish to preserve the institution that we currently call the Grammar School based at Les Varendes. I cherish its ethos, its leadership and its culture, but I want that ethos and culture for *all* of our young people. The harsh truth is, sir, is that if my wife and I lived in Guernsey as children in the second decade of the 21st century and came from the sort of backgrounds that I described earlier, we would not stand any chance whatsoever of securing a place at our Grammar School. All the statistics show – and we have Deputy Le Lièvre, the former Deputy of Education Minister, to

90 thank for this information – that only a tiny handful of children from States' housing secure places at the Grammar School, and none whatsoever gain places at the Grammar School (*interjection*) sorry, Colleges, thank you, whoever corrected me, thank you. None whatsoever gain places at the colleges.

Sir, social mobility in Guernsey via our education system is non-existent, (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) to the extent that it might have worked in the past, it most certainly does not work now. Thus we deny people like myself or my wife, the opportunity to benefit from the classical type of education, and resources that we choose to offer and provide at the Grammar School.

Sir, I do not accept that by removing the 11-plus we lose the institution we currently call the Grammar School. Some of us recognise that that institution offers a particular type of education that is important and attractive to some young people. A school is surely more than just the way it selects its pupils. A school has a history, a philosophy, a culture, a tradition, all underpinned by its alumni, its leadership and its teachers. Our model of one school and four campuses preserves what is best in each of our schools, but offers it to all of our young people without the potential sense of exclusion and failure, which inevitably is attached to an arbitrary series of tests – all

100 subject to distortion through coaching and other interventions, and which no longer has the support of the profession or expert witness, and has proven to be an inaccurate test of potential.

105 Sir, nearly 75 years ago, Winston Churchill – and you would not expect a speech from me without a quote ... seventh from him – in one of his wartime speeches anticipated the future education needs of post-war society. In that speech in 1943 he said:

'Human beings are endowed with infinitely varying qualities and dispositions and each one different from the other. We cannot make them all the same. It would be a pretty dull world if we did. It is in our power, however, to secure equal opportunities for all ...

The secular schooling of the great mass of our scholars must be progressively prolonged and for this we must both improve our schools and train our teachers ... We must make sure that the path to higher functions throughout our society and empire ...'

110 He was of course an Imperialist

'... is really open to children of every family ... all must have their chance.'

He said:

'I look forward to a Britain ... that she will need to draw her leaders from every type of school and wearing every kind of tie. Tradition may play its part but broader systems must now rule.'

That was 1943.

115 Sir, when Winston Churchill said those words, nearly three quarters of a century ago, he was leading a nation in a fight against fascism but he, a product of a Victorian society, still had the vision and time to recognise that education was the bedrock from which the prosperity of society is drawn; and it is only through providing equal opportunities and a level playing field to all members of our community, that we can truly ensure a healthy and prosperous society in the future.

120 The Butler Act of 1944 which shortly followed Churchill's speech, endeavoured to put into action his vision for a more inclusive education system – the equality of opportunity and social mobility that he envisaged and that I and my wife, and so many others, benefited from. But, sir, today nearly a century and a half since Winston Churchill was born, can we truly say in Guernsey, to use his words, we offer equality of opportunity to all, or that we draw our leaders from every type of school and wearing every type of tie?

125 Sir, fellow States' Members, we can all differ on our view as to whether the 11-plus ever facilitated social mobility and was ever a sensible way to divide children's education. But given the way it functions in Guernsey today few, if any, can claim that it is appropriate for a modern society; that it provides for equability of opportunity; or that it maximises the potential of our indigenous population; or provides for fruitful and successful lives or a prosperous community.

130 It is time for this anachronistic, inefficient, unfair selection system to be consigned to the dustbin of history. Let us move forward together in devising an education system that is fit for a modern society and fair to all members of society.

Colleagues, please support Proposition A1 and reject Proposition A2.

135 Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Duquemin, I said I would call you next.

**Deputy Duquemin:** Thank you, Mr Bailiff.

140 I should start by declaring that I have two children, two girls, one in year seven at Beaucamps, that took the 11-plus last year, and one in year five at Castel who will likely be taking the 11-plus next year. I will touch on some of our experiences later.

145 Sir, if Deputy Perrot is to be believed we have all made our mind up on the matter of selection – the 11-plus – and nothing anybody will say is going to sway anybody one way or another. That may be true, but let me share with Members the fact that it was a speech in this Assembly in an earlier debate that assisted me in changing my perspective on the whole matter. I will share with you which one in a moment.

Yesterday, the Chief Minister said he had changed his view on selection during his time in politics and also yesterday the T&R Minister, during a very simple but nonetheless powerful speech, likewise admitted he had shifted his mindset too.

150 Mr Bailiff, we are often comforted by experience, habit, routine, the *status quo* if you like. I well remember my younger daughter joining Castel School, we so desperately wanted her to have the same reception teacher as my older daughter, not because the teacher was necessarily any better, we did not know, but because we knew what to expect, we were in our comfort zone. If it had been okay for one daughter it would be okay for the other.

155 Dare I say it, prior to 2012 that pretty much summed up where I was on the 11-plus and selection. Whilst I am a little younger than many other Deputies and when to school in colour, rather than in the black and white days of others, or even the sepia days of my good friend Deputy Quin, (*Laughter*) I was part of a generation that did not even know I was sitting the 11-plus, certainly not until we noticed all of the desks had been moved into the hall overnight. I did  
160 the 11-plus, went to Grammar, and if the system had been okay for me it would be okay for others. I was proud of the Grammar School, full stop.

Mr Bailiff, the first person to shift my opinion was a former primary head teacher, when I knocked on his door whilst canvassing for the Election four years ago. In just a few minutes standing in his porch he powerfully illustrated to me, the negative effects that the 11-plus had on

165 many Islanders at such a tender age. 'Darren', he said, 'when boys are seven they think they are going to play for Manchester United. When they are 11 they still think they are going to play for Guernsey; but when they are 14 they know that they might not even play football for the pub team – but they are very good at something else.'

He explained that children matured an incredible amount between 11 and 14, and mooted self-selection at 14 when students would make their own reasoned decisions, on that doorstep. The same gentleman came to the Castel Deputies Surgery on Saturday morning to argue his case, and I told him that the few minutes we had shared four years earlier still resonated with me and had helped shift my viewpoint.

Sir, I think this former head teacher may have been one of the primary head teachers in 2001 that unanimously recommended to the States that selection at 11 should cease. The primary heads were joined by the head teachers of all of the secondary schools, who also unanimously recommended to the States that selection at 11 should cease. The only dissenting voice in 2001 came from the head teacher of the Grammar School. And 15 years later all – or the vast majority – of the faces have changed but the carefully-considered professional view has not, and this time all of the primary and all of the secondary head teachers, including the Grammar School, are once again recommending that selection at 11 should cease.

These are not trickle-down views, as has been suggested, these are their professional views. As one correspondent in the Deputies email inbox very succinctly put it in the last few days, I quote:

'Before voting against the Education proposals are you sure that you know better than the Education professionals?'

The letter we received from three former Grammar head teachers was yesterday provided as evidence to retain selection. I would highlight two facts. Firstly, specifically on the matter of the 11-plus, which this amendment focuses on at its heart, the letter crucially says, and I quote:

'We support the Education board that the current process of 11-plus testing as a means of selection has a number of shortcomings.'

It then goes on to refer to alternative methods but is, in my opinion, tellingly silent as to what exactly that might be.

Secondly, I also draw Members' attention to the fact that in this seemingly united front from the former Grammar head teachers, there is one signature that is missing. Mr Bailiff, whilst I will readily admit that the head teacher of the Grammar School from 2006 to 2012 was, and still is, a good friend of mine, not only was his loss to Guernsey education highlighted in the pages of *The Guernsey Press*, his effective leadership of the Grammar School was also very specifically highlighted in the pages of the Mulkerrin Report. He did not sign this letter and I leave others to draw their own conclusions.

Mr Bailiff, I also said that there was a speech in this Assembly that assisted me in changing my perspective of the matter. That speech came from Deputy Bebb who unfortunately is not in the Chamber at the moment. I have not had the chance to trawl *Hansard* to find it and quote exactly what Deputy Bebb said, but in summary what he most eloquently shone a very bright light on is the illogical system, the illogical situation and the unavoidable inconvenient truth, that the students at the high schools and the Grammar School are split up but follow the same curriculum. The education is the same, it is just a form of segregation. It may be a provocative word but I deliberately use that word again 'segregation'.

One Grammar teacher wrote to us and said something very similar. She said: 'I teach classes in the sixth form with students from all of the secondary schools and can only come to the measured and shop floor response that I do not know why the high school students have had to be somewhere else for the previous five years.'

Staggeringly, one of our own Members, Deputy David De Lisle, a former teacher himself, told *BBC Guernsey* on 9th February, almost exactly a month ago, the following about his experiences teaching in a UK comprehensive, compared to teaching in a Guernsey secondary high school, and

I quote word for word because I recorded the clip. Talking of his experiences at a UK comprehensive he said, I quote:

'The problem there was that by mixing the higher attaining pupils with the rest and then setting them we, as teachers liked going in to the A class because they were the top pupils, but not so keen on dealing with streams further down.'

Talking of his experience teaching here in Guernsey:

'I was teaching in one of the secondary schools here for seven years and I feel that the secondary schools give a very good education, and they also give an opportunity for those children not to be drowned out by the higher achievers but to come with their own, and then enter the mainstream again at 16 and enter the Grammar School sixth form.'

215 Mr Bailiff, I was aghast at some of the language used, but it was quite telling. Problem mixing higher attaining pupils with the rest – *with the rest* – and specifically, talking about Guernsey, Deputy De Lisle referred to 'enter the mainstream again at 16' – *enter the main stream again at 16*. I can only assume from this, consciously or sub-consciously, that Deputy De Lisle's suggestion was that primary school students left the mainstream at 11 when they went to a high school, and then re-joined the mainstream at 16 when/if they went to the Grammar School sixth form.

220 I used the word again, 'staggering' that a teacher, a former teacher and a Deputy would infer that we teach more than half of our students in something that cannot be considered as mainstream. I use that word again 'staggering'.

225 The suggestion by Keith Corbin and Dave Piesing, and also made by others in emails to us, that instead of getting rid of the Grammar School we have two grammar, schools does not get rid of segregation. It just moves the line in the sand and would further accentuate the problem.

Mr Bailiff, our postbag email box has been overflowing, but one email that we received last night is worthy of highlighting, and segues me neatly between the nonsensical reasons for segregation and the flaws of the current 11-plus test. The email read, and I quote:

'I successfully passed the Grammar School, but I had a friend who was at least as intelligent as me but had a very difficult home background, he had no support at home and as a result failed the 11-plus. If we had been educated together he would have continued to push me to try harder, and I hope that I would have continued to be supportive of him. All the 11-plus succeeded in doing was dividing up different social classes, not different intelligence, to the detriment of both of us, academically and socially. Please change this unfair system.'

230 Mr Bailiff, I will sound a bit Jeremy Corbynesque when I use just his first name, but I have to say that I was humbled by David's comments. Truly humbled.

Deputy Le Lièvre before, and I hope again today, as already mentioned by Deputy Condor, (*Interjection*) Conder, sorry, I am not normally one of the culprits on that – will highlight that the 11-plus does not provide, today, the social mobility that it perhaps once did. I will hopefully let Deputy Le Lièvre talk about that and I hope he does speak during this debate.

235 At the start of this speech I mentioned that my daughters were in years five and seven, so I have close first-hand experience of the 11-plus process from them and their friends, and will endeavour to share some of this with you. Coaching is a significant, huge issue, and the Education Department are spot-on to raise it in their policy letter. Like her elder sibling my nine-year-old daughter is already being coached to put her on – what we as parents might consider to be – a level playing field with others taking the test. But in truth some other parents from a different, perhaps less fortunate background as David explained, will not have inclination or the investment, to seek out coaching, professional or otherwise.

245 My own personal bugbear is that the extra work that she is doing out of school hours is on the tricks of the verbal and nonverbal reasoning, when perhaps she would be better off concentrating on the basics of English and maths. Whilst on the subject of English and maths, I agree with the tweet I read from one local political commentator, he said, quote:

Quite possible to be poor at maths and so fail the 11-plus but be a beast at other subjects.

Mr Bailiff, the Education Minister has often spoken about the skew between girls and boys at the Grammar School. But I would suggest that it would equally be appropriate to highlight the skew towards mathematicians over those that would more excel in other academic areas.

250 The Grammar School teacher I quoted earlier, also called the 11-plus a once-in-a-lifetime test, and also, quote:

'It must be only test in your lifetime that you can never have a second chance at taking.'

Whilst all children are different and of course some will sail through the experience without as much as batting an eyelid, for some the emotional mental pressure is intolerable.

255 Sir, I am reluctant to share, perhaps exploit, my family's own experiences, but motivated by the candid experiences of other Members that they have so bravely shared in other debates during this term, I feel compelled to do so. My daughter did not sleep before her 11-plus exams. I remember lying next to her on her bed to try and encourage her to sleep whilst she lay, eyes open, staring at the ceiling. I know this was not her only sleepless night, and my nephew had slept on the floor next to his mum's bed in the weeks and months leading up to his 11-plus. After only 260 just a couple of hours sleep, off my daughter went to do that once-in-a-lifetime test that she would not be able to retake. This was my daughter, but I am certain it is a situation that is replicated in many, many Island homes each year. I repeat for some the emotional mental pressure that we put them through is intolerable. Some choose not to take the 11-plus; not because of ability but because of anxiety.

265 Yes, it was different when I took the test in the colour days. Yes, it was different when Deputy Domaille took the test in the black-and-white days. Yes, it was different when Deputy Quin took the test in the sepia days. *(Laughter)* But today, children live in an ultra-HD 3-D world; times have changed and the system has not. Except that they get their results to the nearest decimal point and compare it to their friends.

270 I also had the challenge of explaining to my daughter why one of her friends with a lower mark than her had been offered a place at Grammar on appeal. 'I am not sure that is fair, Daddy,' she said. A head teacher at primary school admitted to me that a large chunk of year six is written-off because of the 11-plus, and an assistant head teacher at high school revealed to me that a large chunk of year seven is written-off because they spend their time rebuilding the confidence of those – and I will use the phrase – that have *failed* the 11-plus. 275

Time at school is a precious resource and as a parent in the States' system I perhaps envy the absence of the 11-plus and the smooth pre-ordained transition that is afforded to – *bought* – by those in the private sector. Two wasted years out of 12 does not make sense.

280 Sir, I saw some raised eyebrows in the Assembly yesterday when Deputy Sillars said students would know which secondary school they would be entering from the moment they started primary school. But this is a benefit in the private sector and one that could and should be enjoyed by other Islanders too.

285 Mr Bailiff, I do not agree with everything in Education's policy letter and I will vote accordingly elsewhere, but on the subject of selection I will support the St Pier amendment; A1 and I encourage all Members, including those that are currently on the borderline, to do the same.

Thank you. *(Applause)*

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Fallaize.

290 **Deputy Bebb:** Excuse me, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Sorry, Deputy Bebb, oh you wish to be relevé? You may be relevé.

**Deputy Bebb:** That would be very kind, thank you. 295

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Fallaize.

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

300 For once I suppose, I have an excuse for a reasonably lengthy speech – and not just because Deputy Perrot, putting the other side of the argument, spoke I think for 35 or 40 minutes yesterday; but also because it is incumbent on those of us who are in favour of abolition, if I can

put in that way, to set out the case as fully as we can in debate. Quite frankly, because of the inadequacies of the policy letter. But in this debate my criticism of the Education Department will rest there, because I do commend them for having the courage and the conviction, to lay their proposals before the States, particularly at this time in a States' term, and I thank them for that.

305 I also commend Deputy St Pier and Deputy Perrot for producing these amendments, which allow the States to debate these issues of policy in the right order.

Sir, this is a speech which I suppose I have probably been waiting 25 years to make. Ever since I took the 11-plus and failed it – and I use the word 'failed' deliberately because that is exactly how it felt to a 10-year-old at that time. Now, I admire Deputy Perrot yesterday for injecting some passion into this debate – I think he was right to do so – and I respect the beliefs that he holds and that he was advocating yesterday. But I am afraid that my belief is that Deputy Perrot is in a state of denial when he claims, as he did, that only comprehensive ideologues portray selection at 11 as pass or fail. Sir, that is complete nonsense.

315 For decades head teachers, class teachers and many parents have been at pains to point out and to insist to their children, that nobody passes or fails the 11-plus; those words almost never pass the lips of teachers and indeed of many parents. The Education Department goes out of its way in the literature that it sends out and in the way that it runs its admissions process to try to avoid ... does not use these terms. The only people who have never believed this propaganda are the children themselves. Because they know full well what is going on, that they are going in to a room to take a test and that if they get above a certain mark they will go to the Grammar School, and if they do not get above that mark they will go to a high school.

320 They say, get above a certain mark and they will be offered opportunities which are denied to those who are unable to attain that mark. The children are not fools. The teachers in year seven in the high schools are very familiar and will tell anybody who asks, with having to rebuild the confidence of children who have had it knocked out of them as a result of believing they have failed the 11-plus, that they have been separated from their friends and judged not to be suited to an academic education.

330 My parents never ever talked to me about passing or failing the 11-plus, nor did my teachers, but we did, my friends did; everybody who was awarded a place at the Grammar School and the colleges has passed and everybody else had failed. My son, who is in year four, uses exactly the same vocabulary today, despite our encouraging him not to. Children having a sense of passing or failing the 11-plus is inherent to the 11-plus and to selection at 11, and no amount of adult propaganda will change the way that children feel about that. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.)

335 In failing the 11-plus I was one of the children who, Deputy Perrot said yesterday, was better suited to vocational subjects. (*Laughter*) Now, in the event, so demoralised was I that quite unexpectedly my parents asked if I wanted to be fee-paid to college and I said yes, because most of my friends were going there and that is where I ended up.

340 Now, a good friend and I collected our 11-plus results I remember, together, from the Post Office, took them to my house, opened our envelopes and he had passed to Elizabeth College and I had failed. We then went to the same secondary school and we opened our 'A' level results together and we got exactly the same grades. So, long before I entered politics I had become very dubious of the efficacy of the 11-plus to accurately predict aptitude or potential in education.

345 Indeed, the excellent results that are achieved by many of our students in high schools at 15 and 16, and the excellent results achieved by many of those who failed the 11-plus and are then fee-paid to the Colleges, is itself a demonstration that the 11-plus is a very bad predictor of potential. Because all of those children were judged at 11 to be better suited to a vocational education and yet they are getting very good results at GCSE.

350 Half of the students – or I think more than half now – in the Sixth Form Centre have come from high schools, having been judged at 11 unsuited to an academic education. Now, some people bizarrely claim that that demonstrates the system works. Well, of course it does not. If a judgement has been made of a child at the age of 10 or 11 that they are unsuited to an academic

education, and at 17 or 18 they are ending up in the Sixth Form Centre taking three 'A' levels, that is not a demonstration that the system has worked.

355 Some of the proponents of selection at 11 – and we heard some of this yesterday, Deputy Stewart and Deputy Jones were among them – said they have more or less given up on the 11-plus but they still want selection. They accept the flaws in the 11-plus. Of course there are alternatives to the 11-plus. You can have more test papers; you can have more emphasis on term work; you could place more emphasis on teacher assessment.

360 First of all you have to ask: what is the purpose of changing the means of selection? It might mean that you get a different cohort of children who are selected, but what does that achieve? It still means that you get selection, or segregation, of one set from another set. But moreover, let's not imagine that these other means have not been tried from time to time. Members of the Education Department who start from the position of wanting to retain selection, very often go  
365 into that Department saying, 'What we need to do is find a different form of selection.'

As a consequence of that, over the years there have been more test papers – I think it was up to six or seven test papers at one time. Then it comes down to a couple and at some point teacher assessment has played more of a role in the process than at other times. Typically, what happens is that after criticism that there are too many test papers, or that there is too much teacher  
370 assessment and it is not sufficiently objective, then the Education Department start removing the number of test papers, making the test more focussed – and then everybody says, 'It is only based on two test papers.' And you go through the whole cycle again.

Now, if you change the means of selection, if you try to make it based on course work, or teacher assessment, the one thing that does most of all – and Deputy Duquemin has already  
375 referred to this – is it completely messes up the whole of year six, as if year six is not messed up already by the 11-plus. Teachers, emphatically, do not want the responsibility of making this life-changing judgement at the age of 10 or 11. But the biggest problem with the alternatives to the 11-plus are that you simply cannot accurately predict a child's potential at the age of 10 or 11. It does not matter what kind of test you conceive, or what method of assessment you conceive, the  
380 concept of trying to predict potential at the age of 10 or 11 has been completely discredited.

Okay, anyone in this room could predict potential for the very highest flyers, that would not be difficult, there will always be those who excel in almost everything they do at school and there will always be those who need huge amounts of support in almost everything they do in school, but they are at the extremes. Most of us are somewhere in the middle and for those children the 11-  
385 plus serves them very badly indeed. These are the children who develop at different paces and in different subjects, moving up and down as they go, not just year-by-year, but sometimes term-by-term in relation to their peers. They are stronger in some areas and weaker in others. Whatever method of selection you use, you are still taking a snapshot in any one year and you are saying, 'You are suited to an academic education' and 'You are *not* suited to an academic education'.  
390 What a complete nonsense.

What about the children who excel in one area and not in another? The children who are really bright in English or the arts subjects, but actually quite dim at the maths subjects or the science subjects – that accurately describes me. In our present system there is just one judgement, I  
395 suppose it is an average judgement that has to be made based on this rather odd IQ test – either you are suited to an academic education or you are not. Either you are going to the Grammar School or you are going to a high school. There is no allowance for the child who excels in one area but needs a lot more support in another area.

Now, in an all-ability school, you do have selection, if that is the way that we want to put it. But you have it in a more sophisticated way, because you have selection to different classes, rather  
400 selection to different schools. I am very much in favour of setting in as many subjects as is reasonably possible. If you make your schools big enough you can open your opportunities to setting, but that is coming on to a different debate that we might have later on. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.)

I am very much in favour of setting but into different classes not into different schools, so that  
405 you can take account of the child who is strong in one area and not as strong in another area. It  
allows, easily, for movements between the sets. We had yesterday from Deputy Perrot, this idea  
that we ought to retain selection at 11 so that children are sent to different levels of education,  
but there should be more fluidity between the schools. Well how on earth is that going to work?  
410 Are we going to keep several places at the Grammar School every year open just for those late  
developers who we are eventually going to send there from the high schools? Or are we going to  
fill up the Grammar School and then when perhaps some of the children who were intensively  
coached through the 11-plus and are struggling to keep up, are we going to take them out and  
say, 'Well actually we did assess you as suitable for a grammar education but now we are taking  
415 you into a high school, and we are going to allow the late developers to go into the Grammar  
School'?

What kind of nonsense is that? The disruption that causes to the child who has built up  
friendships! You get separated from your friends at 11 and then you get separated again at 12 or  
13, when we realise we did not make the right judgement at 11. It is much better, surely, to have  
lots of flexible movement but with the same school.

420 The problem, sir, is not the means of selection; everyone who has looked at this has concluded  
that the best form of selection if you have to have selection at 11, is the 11-plus. The problem is  
selection itself. Now, that is not so very surprising. This system of selection was introduced 70  
years ago, when the economy and society were very different from today.

The grammar schools were set up to provide education for, and to produce, the professional  
425 classes; the high schools were set up depending on which sex you were, either to provide the  
typists and the clerical assistants and the domestics, or the manual labourers in the great  
industries of the time. Grammar schools were providing, I suppose, what you would have called  
the classical education right through right up to 'A' level; the secondary moderns were very often  
children were leaving at 14 or 15, you could only have access to CSE's, no real academic  
430 aspiration. We really do not live in that sort of society anymore, even if we once did – and we may  
well have – but we clearly do not anymore. There is no such obvious divide anymore between the  
academic and the vocational.

Deputy Jones says you cannot treat all children the same, some are more academic and some  
are more vocational. Of course he is absolutely right to say that, (*Interjection*) but can you make  
435 that judgement a definitive judgement at the age of 10? Can you know at the age of 10 that a  
child needs to follow an academic route or a vocational route? Because that is what is required by  
the 11-plus?

I will happily give way to Deputy St Pier.

440 **Deputy St Pier:** Sir, I am grateful to Deputy Fallaize for giving way. It is his reference actually  
to Deputy Dave Jones' position yesterday, and actually he was speaking about setting earlier,  
which nearly brought me to my feet then.

I think yesterday Deputies Stewart, Domaille and Jones all said that they did not much like the  
445 *current* 11-plus, but that selection was part of the human condition – I think that was pretty well  
what Deputy Dave Jones was saying – and we all needed to accept that.

And I absolutely agree with that. In fact, in my opening speech I said and I strongly support the  
need to set by academic ability. I also referred in my opening speech to the need for  
consequential amendments depending on the outcomes of the 'A' and 'B' amendments. And one  
issue that I had in mind – which, again, Deputy Stewart picked up – is this question about the  
450 capacity of the Department to manage the transition.

With that in mind it was always my intention that if A1 i.e. the ending of the 11-plus does in  
fact become the majority view of the Assembly, to lay just such a consequential amendment to  
ensure that there is a mechanism to make sure that we do have sufficient resources available to  
make the transition flawless, because it has to be a flawless transition. But in addition, I think,  
455 because of yesterday's debate and Deputy Fallaize's comment there, I think it would be useful to

pick up the point that setting by academic ability, *must* be part of the process following the end of the 11-plus (**Several Members:** Hear, hear.)

460 I have therefore prepared one such consequential amendment to deal with these two points, i.e. resources and setting, and I will have that circulated to Members this morning; and perhaps Deputy Fallaize, once he has had a chance to a look at it, might actually consider seconding it for me. I do not have any wish to confuse Members but this issue, and the consequences, are so important that there must be no loose ends.

465 Finally, sir, before I allow Deputy Fallaize to resume (*Laughter and interjections*) the other related issue is that of ensuring following the end of the 11-plus, that the gifted and talented students – and he did refer to that in the early part of his speech – do receive the support and the opportunities that they need and deserve. And I know from conversations I have had with Deputy Soulsby that this is an area of great concern to her, as it is to me, and that may well be another loose end that needs tying off before we conclude this week. But I think I would perhaps best leave that to Deputy Soulsby.

470 **The Bailiff:** I have to say from my point of view, you have said you will have the amendment circulated. Well with respect, it can only be circulated with my permission and I cannot say whether I will give that permission until I see it.

475 But I am reluctant for the debate to get confused and if we have other amendments being circulated that Members start to talk about it is then unfair on those Members who have already spoken on the amendments that we are actually debating. So I reserve my position as to whether I will give permission for any further amendments to be circulated, until we have debated these.

480 If it is necessary when those amendments are ready, if the Minister and the proposers of the amendments wish to call for an adjournment to see how best to proceed, then I would be happy to consider an adjournment at that point. But, do not take it for granted that anybody can just suddenly circulate any old amendment they want, at any old time in the debate, because they are not going to get permission to do so, with respect.

Deputy Fallaize.

485 **Deputy Kuttelwascher:** Sir, can I make a point of order regarding what was stated?

Is it in fact not possible to circulate an amendment that has not actually been seconded at the time it is circulated? I have always thought you had to have a proposer and seconder to amendments before they could actually be circulated.

490 **The Bailiff:** Well, yes, let's not talk about amendments that are not yet in play. Can we focus on those that are in play?

Deputy Fallaize, please continue.

495 **Deputy Fallaize:** Thank you, sir.

I will reserve my position on seconding an amendment I have not yet read, if that is okay? (*Laughter*)

500 But I will say, as I have already said, I am very much in favour of setting, I am very much in favour of anything we can do to emphasise the point that children of all abilities, including those of the highest aptitude, can be served very well in all-ability schools. So if there is anything that can be done to emphasise that, it will have my full support.

505 The point is it needs to be in all-ability schools, because the whole basis of selection at 11 and sending children to different institutions has been completely discredited. It never had very much credit in the first place, it dates back to some, I think, dodgy – and what was later thought to be fraudulent – research carried out by a chap pre-Second World War, who was of the opinion that you could judge academic potential on the basis of largely hereditary factors. That is the origin of the 11-plus test – but certainly it has been discredited a long time ago.

Now, a curious aspect of this debate is the accusation by the supporters of the 11-plus, made of those of us who oppose the 11-plus, that we are, quote:

...trying to impose a UK model of education

510 Now, this accusation first of all ignores the very many countries which have nothing to do with the UK, which do not select at 11. But I suppose it is thought to be more provocative and frightening to refer to the UK because it can summon up all of Guernsey's proud autonomy from the UK, and create the impression that we are sort of valiantly fighting off the big brother on the mainland who is trying to impose their model of education upon us. Of course it really is nonsense. The people who are defending a UK-model of education are the people who favour the  
515 11-plus.

The 11-plus is a UK model of education. It was introduced through the 1944 Education Act led by Rab Butler, the Secretary of State at the time, and its creation in Guernsey was led by civil servants who have been sent here by the Ministry of Education to help reform our system; and it was introduced under some pressure applied by the Education Ministry. That, sir, is the history of  
520 the introduction of the 11-plus in Guernsey. The all-ability schools that Deputy St Pier's A1 amendment is seeking to introduce, exist all around the world. So there is no attempt here to impose a UK-model of education.

When Deputy Perrot told us yesterday that the UK ranked somewhere in the 20's, I think it was perhaps the low 20's of the OECD PISA tables, what he did not tell us was whether the countries  
525 towards the top of the table have selection at 11 or not. It may have been because almost none of them do. He also chose not to answer my question about which Secretary of State for Education closed more grammar schools than any other. I expect he knows full well that it was that well-known left-wing ideologue, Margaret Thatcher.

530 There are, of course – I will give way to my friend

**Deputy Perrot:** I wonder whether Deputy Fallaize is willing to give way to me?

I did not answer Deputy Fallaize's cunningly little question yesterday because that would have distracted, in fact, from the argument. But the point is of course about Margaret Thatcher, that she realised that actually when you are bringing in a new policy in relation to education, it takes  
535 something of the order of seven years to follow its way through. So what she was actually doing was completing a policy which had actually been brought into play by her predecessors.

Unfortunate, but there we are.

**Deputy Fallaize:** Which I suppose begs the question, how many grammar schools were  
540 opened, or re-opened, when Margaret Thatcher became Prime Minister and she had 11 years to do something about it? The answer, of course, is none. Not a single new grammar school was opened.

There are dozens and dozens of Tory-controlled local authorities in leafy parts of the country which, having abolished selection at 11, have never reintroduced it. In fact I do not think there is a  
545 single local authority in the UK which having abolished selection has ever reintroduced it. That is because all the evidence tells us that all-ability schools cater just as well as grammar schools for the top 25% of students in terms of aptitude, but they cater very much better for many – not for all – but for many of the other students.

Also, I am really quite bothered by the preparedness of some people to cling to selection at 11  
550 in the face of the overwhelming majority of education professionals' advice. And let's be sure, Deputy Domaille said yesterday that he thought, on balance, the education profession was against selection. It is absolutely overwhelming that the education profession is against selection at 11.

As Deputy Duquemin said, last time 15 years ago all but one of the primary and secondary heads were in favour of abolition. This time every single secondary and primary head is ... they are  
555 all united and unanimous in wanting the States, finally, to allow the development of a model of

education which is more appropriate both to their students' needs and to this Island in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

560 Now, of course we do not have to follow professional advice slavishly, I would be the first to admit that. But if we had an ailment and any one of us consulted two dozen doctors, experts in their field, and they all came to the same conclusion, they made the same diagnosis and they prescribed exactly the same remedy. Would we say, 'Well okay, I know two dozen doctor have said that, but actually there was an old potion mixed up 50, 60, 70 years ago which our forefathers used to say cured this sort of thing, so thanks for your advice but I think I am going to take the potion instead.' (*Interjection*)

565 None of us would take that view – (**A Member:** I would!) (*Laughter*) and that is effectively ... yes, QED! (*Laughter and interjections*) It is good when you can do a speech by tag team!

570 This potion has long since been discredited. But Deputy Sillars was right – and I know I have referred to my time at school and actually I hope other Members do because I think it can help to inform this debate. But Deputy Sillars is right, everyone thinks they know how to run an education system because they once went to school.

But if we try to apply the same thinking to healthcare, Deputy Luxon's Department ... if we said to Deputy Luxon, 'All the doctors in Guernsey may be advising that this is what we need to do with prescribed medicines, but we are not going to take any notice of them, we know much better because we once went to visit a doctor.'

575 Everybody would think that we were bonkers – on which point I am happy to give to Deputy Trott! (*Laughter*)

**Deputy Trott:** ... [*Inaudible*]

580 **The Bailiff:** Can you put your microphone on, Deputy Trott?

**Deputy Trott:** Yes, of course, thank you, sir.

585 It is always a pleasure listening to my friend, particularly, when he tries to tell us about the unanimity of teachers, but I would draw his attention to page 1510 in Education's Report, which clearly states that:

'... amongst teachers who answered the online questionnaire, 48% ...'

– so, less than half –

... were in favour of moving to an all-ability system, whilst 42% disagreed.'

There is clearly no consensus, sir.

590 **Deputy Fallaize:** No, sir, there is. I said amongst head teachers – there is absolute unanimity among *head* teachers that is what I said. (*Interjections*) And that is quite clearly the case.

595 Anybody who suggests that the education professionals are not overwhelmingly in favour of removal of selection is in self-denial. I am sorry, they are. I do not care what the Education Department's consultation exercise says. (*Laughter and interjections*) The Education Department's consultation exercise was pretty meaningless from the moment they decided to call it 'Your Schools, Your Choice' when they had no intention at all of it being your choice. (*Laughter*) It takes into account a very small proportion of education professionals.

600 I would suggest, if Members believe that the education ... with the exception of many at the Grammar School, who inevitably are going to be much more split because they are very protective of their institution, which is not a criticism. But if Members believe the education profession is split, I advise them – I am sure they would be only too pleased to receive Members at lunchtime, or tomorrow – go into the high schools, go into the primary schools and ask them. I am quite

convinced that Members will understand that the overwhelming majority are in favour of abolition.

605 Deputy Perrot also spoke about coaching, and he said that it was wrong to criticise parents who choose to use their own money to pay for tutoring or coaching; and I agree with him, I do not think that that should be criticised at all. In fact it is a completely rational response of parents, when you set up something like the 11-plus. Although the susceptibility of the selection at 11 to private coaching only serves to demonstrate its flaws, remember it is meant to be a tool to predict potential – and yet we know that there are dozens of children being coached, and being  
610 successfully coached, to pass this test.

I am afraid though, that Deputy Perrot completely misrepresented the way in which coaching is going on these days. He said it was okay if there were a few extra hours, in a specific area where a child needed a little bit of extra support, things were not quite clicking into place. Oh no, that is not how it is happening. As the father of a child in year four I can tell him that is definitely not  
615 how it is happening. We are talking about children receiving sustained weekly coaching focussed on the areas tested by the 11-plus, over a period of perhaps a year or in some cases two years.

We are talking about parents actually being advised, 'Your child is capable of getting to the Grammar School, but you had better get him/her coached because all the others are getting them coached.' That is the advice that parents are receiving.

620 There are people out there offering coaching and offering money-back guarantees if they do not get the child through the 11-plus!

I will give way to Deputy Ogier.

**Deputy Ogier:** I would like to thank Deputy Fallaize for giving way.

625 In addition to that some of the 11-plus papers themselves *recommend* a year of coaching, it is on the 11-plus exam papers themselves. It is no longer the case that the 11-plus is not to be coached, it states on the papers that you should receive a year of coaching.

**Deputy Fallaize:** Yes, that is absolutely the case, and I thank Deputy Ogier for that.

630 Deputy Jones says, life is competitive, (**A Member:** It is.) and of course, life is competitive. I am very competitive, I encourage both of our children to be competitive, often much more than my wife appreciates. But there is competition and there is competition. Can you imagine, you turn up for football trials for the first 11, when you are 11, and the coach says, 'I am going to put you in the first 11, and I am going to put you in the second 11, and that is where you are going to stay  
635 for the next five years. Do not think about moving, it does not matter how well you play, or how badly you play, or how well you come on, you are not changing, you are in the first 11, and you are in the second 11 for five years, based on a snapshot at the age of 10 or 11.'

That is not healthy ... I am in favour of healthy competition, constructive competition. I would have thought an all-ability school is a very competitive environment. But competition does not  
640 imply you need to take a snapshot judgement of a child at the age of 10.

The 'life is competitive' school of thought, ought to be a bit concerned with the disparity between the sexes in results of the 11-plus. We know that girls develop more quickly than boys, many of us would accept that they probably stay more developed as well. (*Laughter*) But the 11-plus disproportionately favours girls. This year in years seven and eight at the Grammar School there are 98 girls and 66 boys. Now, many of the boys are probably quite pleased about that  
645 (*Laughter*) but that is not a sound basis for deciding which school they should go to, quite clearly.

It is a similar story in many previous years. I look back over the last 10 or 15 years; and the last year I was at school the Grammar School had 355 boys and 494 girls. A complete disparity, a test which disproportionately favours round about 50% of the population and disproportionately disadvantages the other 50%.  
650

Recruitment is a problem too, we know it is much harder to recruit into schools where the children of 35% to 40% of the highest aptitude have been taken out, as we do. Much more difficult. We do not segregate at primary school either – I wonder whether the supporters of

655 selection one day will have the courage of their convictions and suggest that we should take a test at 5 or 7 and segregate children at primary school?

**A Member:** What about 14?

660 **Deputy Fallaize:** A very small percentage of children attend private primary schools. The vast majority of children in Guernsey attend, what are generally very popular, States' primary schools.

Now, what on earth is thought to be the purpose of suddenly deciding at the age of 11 that this sort of education that children have had up to the age of 11 is now longer appropriate; and that they have to be divided and taught not in different sets, but in completely different institutions? But only for five years because then at 16 we bring many of them back together again in the Sixth Form Centre, or at the College of FE. Why? Why? What is the rationale? What is the purpose of all of this, simply between the ages of 11 and 16?

665 Sir, I do think the States needs to be mindful of the clear advice it has received from all the head teachers in our primary and secondary schools, about the many and significant disadvantages of the 11-plus; and we need to be mindful of their enthusiasm for moving to all-ability schools. But ultimately, to conclude, I think that this debate is about standards and opportunities and potential; and on any objective analysis the 11-plus lets down too many of our young people.

670 These young people are this Island's future. In the years ahead our community and our economy, cannot afford to constrain the opportunity of its people and to limit their potential, in the way the 11-plus inevitably does. Almost *all* of the rest of the world has accepted that selection at 11 is an idea whose time has long since passed. I honestly believe that a majority of States' Members in their heart know that selection at 11 is an idea whose time has passed – not all, of course not all, there are a substantial number who do not. But I believe a majority of States' Members know that selection at 11 is flawed. And I implore Members, finally, today to consign it to history.

680

**Several Members:** Hear, hear.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy James has been waiting all morning to speak, I know, so –

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**Deputy James:** Thank you, sir, and very patiently so.

Sir, we have heard some very passionate and persuasive speeches, not least Deputy Perrot and Deputy Fallaize, and I would agree with Deputy Fallaize's comments that I think that probably most of the Assembly have already determined how they are actually going to vote on this.

690 Looking at the amendments as they currently stand I believe the St Pier A1 amendment, unfortunately for me, is a half-way measure to abolish the Grammar School and is almost a 'sitting on the fence' alternative which I cannot go with.

Last evening I revisited the results of the consultation document and would agree with Deputy Fallaize in his comments that I do not know how the Education board can actually continue to sell their position on their somewhat perplexing interpretation of the results. I found myself thinking – I think someone alluded to it yesterday – if you don't hear what you want to hear, don't ask.

695 We are asked to believe that this Island is littered with traumatised young people and children labelled as failures. (*Interjections*) Well, I do not see that. I do not have children – never have, never wanted any. But I do take quite an active part in this Island's activities put on by children. I go to their pantomimes, I go to their concerts, I go to all sorts of activities that young people put on; and I see the young people of our Island as being bright, talented, well-balanced young people, all across this Island.

700 I wondered about the trauma that these failures suffer – and I think you will find that there are few, if any, referrals to our CAMHS service, which is the Children, Adolescents and Mental Health Service. How many referrals for children not having passed? What we do see are children referred

705

to services because of stress and you think why would young people in this day and age suffer from stress? Well I am going to say something fairly controversial and I believe that children suffer from stress because of pressure exerted on them by their parents. (**Several Members:** Hear, hear.)

710 Too many parents these days want to live their lives through their children. (**Several Members:** Hear, hear.) For any of you that were up early enough this morning and heard the news, what we have seen – if we are going to hold up the UK model as an ideal – a 54% increase of young people in the UK are now being prescribed antidepressants. What a damning indictment of what we have come to.

715 Deputy Laurie Queripel, I think it was you, that you said that there has been a change in our culture – and what is it? Of course there is a change, most of the children that you see walking around these days are almost robots – (**A Member:** Yes.) their heads in their iPads and their iPhones. And who is responsible for that? Do people not talk to each other anymore? Is this a nice easy babysitting service that ... yes, the internet is an incredibly valuable and useful tool. How many times do you go out to restaurants and cafés, and you see families all with their heads down looking at their iPads, not talking to each other?

720 Recently, a couple of months ago I was having coffee with Deputy Soulsby in a café in town, and a young mother came in and she had two young daughters with her – six or seven, something like that. This mother is sitting at the table and she has got a *book* and she is reading to her children! And I was shocked – well, delighted and shocked – and so pleased that I could see a mother that was talking to her children. So much so, that I went across to her and I said, 'I am so pleased to see you talking to your children'!

725 We have just become such a crazy, crazy society. So this 54% increase in children being prescribed antidepressants, I ask you. In my view, children and young people need to be loved, they need to be supported and nurtured and not *driven*, partially by their parents. We seem to have lost the knack or the ability to value all skills and abilities.

730 Life is a whole series of choices and selection. As much as I would like to go for amendment 1, for me it would be like being asked to stand back and demolish my house without having any solid firm plan or proposals to create a better dwelling. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) I think, in the absence of that ... that is what worries me. I do not think the Grammar School is an ideal, but please, please, show me a better alternative. Please do not lead me down any *cul-de-sac* and I do not know what is at the end of it.

735 So please, under that basis I have to go for amendment 2. Let's not throw out what we have unless we have a *better* alternative. I somehow feel that I might just be on the losing side in this vote, but the one thing for sure is I came from fairly sturdy sepia stock and will not be rushing for the antidepressants.

740 I urge you to support Amendment 2. (*Applause*)

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Brehaut has been waiting a long time. Deputy Brehaut.

745 **Deputy Brehaut:** Thank you, sir.

Just in response to the Deputy, the iPad is an incredible learning device, it is fantastic what children can access on an iPad. I know as a parent sometimes – sorry, Deputy James, I had forgotten your name briefly – the skills children can acquire in using a device like that is incredible, things that we did not have. Many a time whether you are doing homework, or whatever you are doing with your child, they can ask you a question and two seconds later, or less than that, the answer is in front of them.

750 I know people have declared their interest in schools, I need to say that I did attend the Boys Grammar, my attendance was not particularly good, I went about once a year – I need to explain it was a motor tax office by then. (*Laughter*) Before I launch into perhaps a longer speech for me – but certainly no longer than a Treasury Minister intervention – (*Laughter*) I just need to say something which is important. My children did not sit the 11-plus, I never wanted them to, they could have done if they wanted to, that was up to them. A child was then destined to go to a high

760 school predetermined by the Education Department which was fine by me. Because we moved house, it then meant that my child was going to go to high school 'B', the rest of her school friends were going to high school 'A', but that was okay because there was a cohort of 16 or 18 children still with her to go to that high school. Come transition day, the day when children are taken to the school, my child was the *only* child from a cohort of 69 going to a particular school, and I am afraid that was too much – particularly, dare I say, for my wife – so we took things into our own hands. But the Education Department, my friends at times, could help themselves by  
765 having a more open-minded view of the catchment area ... **(A Member:** Hear, hear.) he says, turning microphone back on.

Sir, some years ago I called into St Martin's School just when the children, those 10-year-old children, were sitting the 11-plus. As I walked past the classroom and looked through the fire-glass door, I saw tiny little people all looking a tad nervous about to take an exam that would  
770 shape their future in a manner that they simply could not comprehend at that age. I remarked to the maths teacher – I hope she does not mind me saying so, an older teacher – 'You have to feel for them, don't you? And it was met by this response, 'No, not at all, this is a fantastic opportunity for them' was the response from the maths teacher.

That exchange sums up just where we are as a community and a society, with the exam. The  
775 teacher in that case could not convince me, nor me the teacher. Those children, we are told, are taking part in a selection process – and what is wrong with selection? It happens all the time, it is part of life, they had better get used to it. But actually nothing they will experience in the future is quite like the 11-plus. In the future they may offer themselves up for a job interview, or to participate in some project – whether art-related or whether sports, or employment-related – and  
780 if they do not get it they can try and try and try again.

You cannot do that with the 11-plus. But at 10 years old, one chance only. How many times can you sit your driving test, for example? But what if we adopted the same mindset of the 11-plus approach to driving? Can you imagine the conversations we would have? 'Thanks for the lift,  
785 of course, I would like to drive but I guess I was not as advanced as you when I was aged 17'. And the response, 'Hey mate, you didn't fail the driving test, you were just selected to be a pedestrian.' *(Laughter)* It makes absolutely no sense whatsoever!

I am also fascinated how the language police who are usually so intolerant of anything that can be described as politically correct, then get a little bit tetchy when the language of 'pass' and 'fail' is used. Mothers and fathers literally run through the playground clutching papers, exam  
790 results, telling anyone prepared to listen that their child has passed the 11-plus- a clear, positive association. Personally I have no issue with saying a child has failed a selective exam, but those who support the exam feel uneasy at telling a child that they failed, whilst at the same time celebrating the success of those who have passed. We tell a little white lie to the child, but actually the real lie is to ourselves.

As a parent, I stood in the playground seeing mums in huddles of tears on receiving exam  
795 results. We are not talking about what some may describe as pushy parents, just mums and dads who thought their child was in with a chance. But just a note on parents who might be described as assertive, or even pushy, at times. At the end of Year 5 the children will walk to meet their parents in the playground, with a letter from the head telling them which class their child will be in  
800 in Year 6. Some parents will open the envelope there and then and share their disappointment with other parents and begin to negotiate with the head within days as to which class their child should be in and with whom. They want them with a cohort, they want them with other children they think have the potential, and they want them with the teacher they believe can deliver for them.

For some parents the appeal process starts in earnest the moment they have the results. Lives  
805 are laid bare, genuine reasons are given in an effort to understand or explain the child's perceived poor performance that week – marital breakdown, mum's new partner, dad's new partner, a death in the family. And with children, remember at the age of 10, something as simple as – well, not simple – something as traumatic as losing a pet has an effect too. How can we really seek to

810 justify to parents when, as happened a couple of years ago, one twin passed and the other did not? How do you explain then reuniting the twins in the Grammar? Doesn't really illustrate what a crazy, unfair, unjust and random process that it is?

815 It is worthy of note that St Martin's School is considered to be perhaps the best school, the most proficient, at getting children through the 11-plus. Yet the staff who oversee that process are telling you again, they do not want to do it any longer. They see each and every child, deal with each and every family, they see it in the round, each term. We struggle with it and we only visit it once every 15 years or so.

820 With regard to the primary teachers – and actually secondary too – I felt very uncomfortable by some, not all, politicians implying these staff are in the pockets of the Education board. How patronising to the professionals can that be? These people have made the case to remove selection consistently for years, regardless of the makeup of the ever-changing Education Committee. Yesterday in a long speech Deputy Perrot spoke of families who make sacrifices for their children and give up hard-earned cash to tutor; and I paraphrase what he was saying, 'Well, good on them, why should we chastise those who go the extra mile for their child or children?' 825 And he is right, we should not. But it would be a mistake to think that Joe Average, or Joe Low Paid, is accessing the tutoring – they are not. Some are, yes, but it is those who can well afford private education that also pay to tutor their children; tutoring has become an industry and Joe Average has been priced out.

830 We often speak of social mobility through the College scholarships and we know the evidence actually does not stack up. But what we do not talk about is exactly who does access the placements. I should imagine in the 60's and before, a doctor, a lawyer, a businessman wanted their son or daughter to attend college and they would simply pay for them to do so. That is not the case anymore. Families with joint income levels that would be eye watering for some, get a free pass to a school that they would have paid for anyway if they had to. That is ridiculous, as 835 well as a thousand miles away from the spirit and the ethos, behind scholarships.

Deputy Domaille also spoke fondly in support of the college system and spoke of his own experience, but can I respectfully suggest to Deputy Domaille that time has moved on a little. In the 60's and the 70's the Grammar and colleges were the Island's universities of the day. If you 840 wanted to join the Civil Service or get the white collar job, an OE or grammar education was the ticket you required. Just how many students in the 60's on Guernsey, for example, left to attend university? That number surely must be much lower than today. Now university is just another step on the lifelong learning ladder and although the college and Grammar play their part, evidently children, students, succeed without them.

845 What I will say is an Achilles' heel in the Education Department proposals, in my view, is the bursary system. The mixed message taints these proposals and gives those who want to scale this policy, only to demolish it – too many finger holds in my view. For if there is no Grammar as we know it, why on earth then imply, or explicitly refer, to measures that would assist your child to a new centre of excellence at the college? In my view, put simply, private school means private.

850 The argument though, that private means private, for some has become something of a recruiting sergeant for those who wish to rally around the flag of anti-elitist education – although that does make me smile somewhat because some have been coveting elitist education for some years. But I would say to them and other parents that opt-out of the States system, what do you think you are buying? Because when you look at the results across the board there is far more common ground than you may feel that there is. And if you are concerned parents on average 855 income will be priced out again, reflect ... priced out of what? An educational facility with similar results to the ever-improving States' sector.

860 I acknowledge the history, the heritage, the real sense of place and emotional attachment people have to the colleges but, please Members, do not allow your blue-remembered hills of yesteryear and your backlit soft-focus algebra moments and your time in a special institution, to cast a cloud on the progress of learners today, here and now.

Just on the Grammar: why is it such a great school? Why is it so highly regarded? Why do we value its success? How do they achieve such fantastic results? Well actually it just might be because following a five-year separation and doing the same curriculum, the high schools join the sixth form.

865 Sir, at 10 years old boys and girls put their Lego down, or their dolls, or their computer game, and skip to school – school is great, learning is fun, our teachers are brilliant and primary school has to be the best place in the world to be; you are with friends, you are learning, you are bonding, you are learning social skills and you are learning – as teachers always tell us – how to learn. But then amongst the primary colours and the wall paintings, the black and white Education  
870 Act of 1944 changes things for ever. A process designed to separate blue-collar workers from white-collar workers to rebuild a post war nation, is used to prepare children for life in education in the 21st century digital greenhouse age. How stupid, how silly, how short sighted – and in my view, just how cruel is that?

I was going to end there, but just briefly in concluding, we had friends round yesterday  
875 evening and we were talking about the 11-plus, and a friend of mine at the table, who I will call Colin – although his real name is Andrew – (*Laughter*) said, 'I sat the 11-plus two years after my brother, he had failed. The worst thing then happened to me, I passed'. And that is what it does to families, so please bear that in mind and please today, because you will be here ... if you do not do it today, you will be back another time. Please grasp that nettle and deal with the 11-plus  
880 today.

Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Lester Queripel.

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

Sir, I will start by saying I support amendment A1 and I will explain why. (*Interjections*)

But first of all there was a lot of focus given by several Members of the Assembly in this Chamber yesterday, of education becoming an election issue. I would like to spend a moment focusing on that in my speech, because it sounded like some of my colleagues live in fear of  
890 voting the wrong way and losing votes at the forthcoming Election. That concerns me, sir, because surely it is about doing what is right for Guernsey and not about losing votes at the next Election.

I certainly would not want to be in the shoes of any of my colleagues who live in fear of voting the right or wrong way, sir, that must be an awful place to be; because what that means is that a Deputy could vote the right way in the opinion of some members of the electorate, on 99 issues  
895 but on the 100th issue – in this case Education – that Deputy could vote the wrong way and then members of the electorate would not vote for them in the Election. So a Deputy could tick 99 out of 100 boxes on a multitude of major issues but just because they do not vote the right way on one out of 100 they are told they will then suffer at the next Election. Well, how narrow-minded and blinkered is that approach? (**A Member:** Hear, hear.)

900 I do not expect you to answer that, sir, (*Laughter*) because I am going to answer it. It is extremely narrow-minded and blinkered. Any Deputy that gives in to that kind of bullying should be thoroughly ashamed of themselves, in my opinion. There have been threats and bullying over this whole education issue, the same as there were threats and bullying over issues such as same sex partnerships, the Transport Strategy, and the future population of the Island. Now we are  
905 being threatened and bullied on the way we vote on the future education of our children.

Well, sir, I am not going to support this amendment A1 because I am giving in to bullies. I have never at any time in my life given in to bullies – and any Deputy who does that is in dereliction of their duty in my opinion. I am supporting this amendment because I have spoken to dozens of my fellow Islanders, including several children, I have been to the presentations, I have read and re-  
910 read the report, I have done my own research and I have spoken to my fellow Assembly colleagues on the board. Now in general, half of the people I have spoken to are in favour of dispensing with the 11-plus, and half of the people I have spoken to are in favour of retaining it.

915 So I now have to make a judgement call and whichever way I vote I am only going to please half of the people I have spoken to. So I will base my vote on what I think is right for the Island, and that is what I always base my votes on in this Chamber. What I think is right for Guernsey on this occasion, is to stand alongside my colleagues on the board and vote in favour of any amendment, or proposal, that gets us to where they and I think we need to be.

920 Sir, if I lose votes at the next Election because of the way I voted on one issue, then that is the way of it. I may well be out of a job come 28th April, but at least my conscience will be clear (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) because I have not given in to bullies and I have voted for what I think is right for Guernsey. And surely almost every issue we debate in this Chamber is an Election issue.

925 I have said on more than one occasion in this Chamber, I think we have an excellent board at Education; they are not only passionate about the future of education here in the Island, but they are also experienced enough to know what needs to be done to provide more opportunities for all of our children. In my view when we have a meld of passion and experience, then we are on a solid foundation. Of course, the board have done the job we have elected them to do and that is why I am standing alongside my colleagues on Education, all the way down the line on this one.

930 Sir, I think we all need to bear in mind the words of Deputy Conder and Deputy Sherbourne, and I say that because when I asked Deputy Conder a simply question at the presentation at Beau Séjour he gave me a simple answer. The question was, why is the present system of education here in Guernsey considered to be so dysfunctional? Deputy Conder replied, 'Because it disadvantages so many of our children and the new proposals will offer far more opportunities for all of our children, and encourage and promote the inclusive society we so often speak of.'

935 In his recent letter to *The Press* Deputy Sherbourne said, 'Basing our system of education in the 21st century on a 1944 UK Education Act and an outdated view of intelligence, will not provide this Island with the people and the skills we need to compete on a global stage.'

So, thank you Deputy Conder and Deputy Sherbourne for those words, because you absolutely nailed the whole issue in a couple of sentences for me.

940 I just want to read paragraph 1.3 of the report, which echoes the words of Deputy Conder and Deputy Sherbourne:

'The Department has concluded that the 11-plus system is not an appropriate mechanism for determining the future of children's secondary education. It fails to deliver equality of opportunity, fairness or the social mobility which was envisaged by the original architects of the system. Such a flawed selection process condemns too many to a life in which potential is not realised, economic outputs from our local workforce are reduced and social problems and social costs are perpetuated. In coming to that conclusion, the Department recognises that not all children possess identical aptitude, potential or ambition and that guided, directed choice or selection is a natural part of life. This fundamental truth is reflected in our recommendations for replacing the 11-plus system.'

That approach, sir, is reflected in Amendment 1, which is why I will be supporting it.

Thank you, sir.

945 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Sillars, the Minister, will speak next.

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

I will confess I was a little bemused by the opening speech of Deputy St Pier, as I wondered how it was relevant to the amendment. Whilst listening to it I was reminded of a story of a scorpion who asked a fox to carry him on his back over the river.

950 The fox says, 'Why would I do that as you can sting me if I carry you on my back?' The scorpion responds, 'Don't be silly, why would I do that? We would both drown – it would not be in my interest to do that.' Reassured, the fox agrees and the scorpion jumps on to the back and the fox starts swimming and starts to carry his new friend across the river. When they are half way across the scorpion stings the fox who says, 'Why, why did you do that? We are both going to die.' The scorpion sighs and says, 'I'm sorry it is just in my nature.' (*Laughter*)

955 I sympathise with the fox, empathise with the fox even.

Deputy St Pier talked about apologies and the lack of progress with the Education Department's Vision debated in 2013. I think this came up in November '14, and May '15, and I refer to the annual updates that explained where we were, how our focus was the educational outcomes, and looked at the successes so far. Deputy St Pier knows that, but neglected to mention this and simply goes back to 2013.

If he had read these or listened, he would have seen that we had prioritised our ambitious workstreams, other issues came in and had to be dealt with, such as the Department of Education in England's change to the GCSE qualifications and 'A' Levels, which we had to deal with. And there was a small matter of stripping £7 million out of our budget, plus continuing with some difficult negotiations with T&R over issues such as the introduction of pre-school, and further reviews of our plans for the rebuild of Le Mare de Carteret Schools. I suggest that it was far more effective to change a system from a position of strength.

We must get the best out of our system before trying to change it; and I would suggest that we were not in the position a few years ago. We had to prioritise resources and our efforts were not just on educational outcomes, but trying to achieve our financial transformation targets – and we have taken £6½ million out of budget so far. I would go on at length and rebut the offensive, distorted and petty point-scoring comments and accusations; but I am not going to sink to that level. The issue that we are discussing is far too important (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) to waste time defending the Education board and Department. We do not need to defend ourselves, as our results speak for us. I am not going to waste your time doing so. I would also request that whilst this debate is emotive, we should treat each other with respect and courtesy (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) and not bandy personal abuse.

He asked how would we know if educational outcomes will improve – and then he said we should listen to the experts. Well, our current primary head teachers state that they are certain our proposals would improve primary education and transition to secondary. It is not just about educational outcomes, it is about the mental health and wellbeing of our students; as highlighted last night by Professor Mark Williams, the average age for the first onset of depression is now 13-15 years old. As parents we want our children above all else to be happy and that means setting them up for the future with the best education we can, removing selection will help.

Our package will help with the introduction of personal pathways which will engage students, improving outcomes. Our current secondary education head teachers have expressed their confidence in plans, and can work with the all-ability intake. The top-performing successful jurisdictions have all-ability education systems, according to the OECD and the Sutton Trust Studies.

What about statements from other experts, such as the NUT and the NASUWT? I will quote a recent statement from Northern Ireland Education Secretary who said:

'The evidence, both local and international, is clear: mixed ability schooling can deliver better outcomes for everyone.'

How will we know if our proposals are a success? We will see the results rising. We will see more happy, confident, well-rounded young people leaving school, gaining qualifications, contributing to our society and contributing to the success of our economy.

He was worried about the capacity of the Department to cope with so much change and yes, maybe proposing later today even further hugely-disruptive change with the closure of one of our secondary schools. I suspect we will hear more about that later. Still, I do thank Deputy St Pier for his support in seeking to remove our current system of selection at 11.

If I could just address some points raised by Deputy Perrot. There were many contradictions in his speech in support of retaining the 11-plus. Firstly, he says the snapshot approach to selection is flawed: but a decision by whatever means has to be taken at a moment in time, therefore a snapshot. Whatever system used – and he mentioned a few – would be flawed; and no, a decision does not have to be made at 11. He never identified what the failings were in our all-ability primary schools.

He then stated that we are all born different – and I agree with that; and in his speech supporting selection at 11 infers that our future path is effectively decided at birth – I disagree with that.

Carole Dweck the leading light in growth mindset research –

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**Deputy Perrot:** Point of correction.

I never said that, and I certainly I did not infer it, nor did I imply it.

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**Deputy Sillars:** Carol Dweck the leading light in growth mindset research and many others involved in neuroscience, psychology and education for many years, have recognised that the view of intelligence in vogue at the time of the introduction of the 11-plus is inaccurate, out of date and unfair. This selection test has no place in a modern research-informed education system. I will, in a moment, explain the foundation for the 1944 Act in England was based on a lie.

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Primary school is too important, establishing the foundations in literacy and numeracy to spend time on coaching and teaching to the test. I cannot believe that Deputy Perrot would wish us to sacrifice the progress we have made in Key Stages 1 and 2.

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We have very fortunately managed to steer away from SATs testing in our primary schools; reintroduction of these sorts of tests at 11 would still place great pressure on our 10- and 11-year-olds and would lead to distortion of the curriculum, preparing our children to pass the test rather than to educate them. We see that happening to an extent, and understandably, in the secondary schools due to the high-stake exams at 16. However, we do not wish to blight the learning of our primary children by bringing back SATs.

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I am pleased that Deputy Perrot has recognised the success of our high schools and the pride in pupils. However, I would suggest that it is *despite* the system. A great example is how one of our schools has worked tirelessly to improve and to change negative impressions of their schools, which after years of media battering have finally had their due reward in positive coverage last week. They have pride because against the odds they – staff, students, parents and the wider community – have shown what a very good school they are.

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Just to be clear, the Department does not need to orchestrate positive publicity. The schools are quite capable of generating their own good news stories without our help. Insinuations are insulting and offensive. Staff and pupils of this school have clearly spoken out about the nonsense of selection at 11, even with their success. They recognise there is no need for it in the 21st century.

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I can confirm that the Education Department is now in principle, not against Treasury & Resources Department's suggestion of Proposition 1, in order to hold a mini-debate on the future of the 11-plus and selection at 11, prior to deciding on the future size and structure of secondary education. The Education Department board is unanimously in favour of ending the current selective process at age 11 and as a result will cease the current system of special places at the grant-aided colleges for the new Year 7 students in September 2019. The Education board would therefore encourage Members to vote for Amendment 1.

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Why do we favour ending of the 11-plus process? The 11-plus selection process is based on outdated and discredited research. It was put in place as a result of the 1944 Education Act. This was based on the work of Cyril Burt, an educational psychologist of the early 20th century, whose work has now been largely discredited. Our educational philosophy is underpinned, not by the views of Cyril Burt and his notion that ability is fixed, but by the research amongst others of Carol Dweck.

Carol Dweck has developed the concept of the growth mindset and this encourages the belief that all abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work, and is supported by empirical research that beliefs affect outcomes. To quote our primary heads:

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'We believe that all children should be given the opportunity to work hard, face challenges and learn from mistakes, improve and excel. This a growth mindset that runs through all our schools ensuring all children succeed.'

Our primary head teachers are unanimous in their views that the current selective process is not fit for purpose.

As I already mentioned in my opening speech, yes, the Education Department has been criticised for its response to the public consultation. However, I would argue that we have listened. The public wish to keep four small schools, which is consistent with the Education Department's proposals, for a one-school model over four sites, which provides the breadth of curriculum with the community. The public wish to continue the funding of the colleges, but move to means-testing or bursaries, which accords with the Education Department's recommendations. We listened. The public wish to maintain the Sixth Form Centre attached to a school, which is what we are recommending in our proposals.

We did consider the public consultation very carefully, and the points that respondents did not want selection to be based solely on the 11-plus – but the majority wanted a different way of selecting by attainment or ability. The difficulty we have faced is that there is not a fair or satisfactory alternative means of selection. Other administrations have tried to find selection tests which are not *[Inaudible]*, but have failed. We looked at alternative forms of testing, but the majority of these flaws would remain. We also considered course work, or some form of teacher recommendation, or moderated teacher assessments. The inclusion of some form of teacher recommendation in the selection process was vociferously dismissed by the responses from the teaching profession, and I understand why. Key stage attainment data would also be difficult, as these assessments are not completed until too late in the school year and would not give sufficient granularity.

In addition I would also like to emphasise that, as explained in our consultation process, the online questionnaire was part of our considerations. We also considered the views of the education profession, captured in a number of different ways. We carefully evaluated all the independent research about the performance of students in selective and non-selective systems. We looked at what is working well in Guernsey and what needs to change, and then designed a system taking all these things into account, which we believe keeps the best of what we have but addresses the problems of inequality and fairness that we know exist within our current selective system.

Research has shown that there is little difference in average overall attainment, as measured in external tests, when selective systems are compared with non-selective systems as a whole. The Institute of Education Research has shown that overall there is little difference in performance between selective and non-selective systems on average. I would like to draw your attention to research from the OECD which seeks to dispel the myth that excellence is all about selection.

For centuries, educators have wondered how they should design educational school systems, so that they can best serve students' needs. Some countries have adopted non-selective and comprehensive school systems that seek to provide all students with similar opportunities; while other countries track and stream students with the aim of serving students according to their academic potential and/or interests. Conventional wisdom has it that non-selective systems serves equity, whilst selective systems foster quality and excellence. Yet none of the countries with a high degree of stratification or grade repetition are among the top-performing education systems. Rather the OECD PISA results show that the highest-performing education systems combine both.

In case you missed that, none of the countries with a high degree of stratification or grade repetition are among the top-performing education systems; results show the highest-performing education systems combine both.

This research suggests that the overall performance in the States' sector should not be materially different in selective or non-selective States' system. However, both equity and social mobility is likely to improve within the latter. The reality therefore remains that our current selective system restricts what we can achieve, limits pathways for young, and for many of our young people closes doors to them at the age of 11 or 10 and too often affects their mental wellbeing.

Should anyone question whether the last point is valid, then I would refer them to the views again of our primary head teachers who unanimously offered their support for our proposals and in talking about the effects of the 11-plus process, they said:

'The emotional demands on our children during this process, and the emotional fall out once results are known, have detrimental long-term effects on many of our students. As we become increasingly aware of the importance of the mental wellbeing of children and its impact on adult life, it is clear that we need to move towards a system which builds self-esteem and belief.'

1110 I would remind you of the statement made by Andy Woolley, who is the Regional Secretary of the NUT, who said:

"Experience in the UK and elsewhere has shown that educating all abilities of children together improves the general standard of achievement without any detriment to the more academically able. ... All Guernsey's Primary Schools are all ability already and nobody seeks to question this – the extension of this to Secondary Schools would be a very positive step.'

1115 I have heard many people talk about the 11-plus opening doors and providing choices. Unfortunately the harsh reality is that the majority of 11-plus system does not provide choice and the current 11-plus system closes off pathways to too many children too early. Last year 432 out of the 499 Year 6 pupils chose to sit the 11-plus test; 284 were offered places that were not their first choice. Our recommendations are founded on our underlying core values which put the interests of the children and young people at the centre of what we do. As the OECD concludes:

'the best education systems in the world combined excellence and equity...'

Which is exactly what our proposals will achieve.

1120 The decision to recommend removal of the 11-plus is not one that we have taken lightly, and the consultation response was discussed at length. We believe the current selective system at 11, i.e. the 11-plus, should end in September 2019. I therefore strongly encourage Members to vote for excellence and equity today, and agree to the current selective process at age 11 and support amendment A1.

Thank you.

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**The Bailiff:** Deputy Trott.

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

That was an interesting speech.

1130 Sir, what I am about to say may surprise a number of Members in this Assembly, but I did not pass the 11-plus. (*Interjections and laughter*) No, sir, I did not pass the 11-plus – I simply was not allowed to take it. My hard-working parents decided that they wanted me to go to Beechwood, and in so doing saved, at today's prices, hard-pressed taxpayers about £5,000 per annum, because that is about what it costs to educate a child in our primary system. But they chose not to burden the taxpayer, sir, rather to burden themselves and I had the privilege of being educated at the Elizabeth College Lower School. (*Interjections and laughter*)

1135 Now, sir, at age 11 I came together with a number of Members of this Assembly, I was very proud to be in the same cohort as our current Chief Minister and indeed our sitting Deputy Greffier. And there were others within that cohort, within that school at that time, a couple of years lower than me, Deputy Ogier; and a man who has left an indelible mark on my time at school, sir, Deputy Dorey, who I will recall was my class prefect at the time. (*Interjections and laughter*) Despite all these obstacles to a good education (*Laughter*) I enjoyed my time at that school enormously.

1140 It is probably important to mention that setting and streaming were a matter of course, and I mentioned that I came together at age 11 with the current Deputy Le Tocq and indeed Greffier Ross, and that was the last I saw of them, sir, until a few years later when they advised me that one

of them was going off to University College London, and the other was going to the Sorbonne. I will not carry on, sir, in case I embarrass them, but that was the result of the quality education that they received.

1150 Now, the important point of this speech is this, the Minister for the Education Department has made quite clear that the majority want a different way of selecting. Sir, have I your permission to mention an amendment that I might lay, if I get your permission to lay it? Can I do that, sir?

**The Bailiff:** I would rather people do not talk about amendments that are not yet in play, 1155 **(Deputy Trott: Good idea.) (Laughter)** I know that Deputy St Pier indicated that there might be one.

**Deputy Trott:** I hear what you are saying, sir, so I will tell you what seems to me might be a good idea. *(Laughter)* That is, whether or not at some stage during the course of today the 1160 Assembly is given the opportunity to consider – bearing in mind the Minister said that the majority want a different way of selecting – whether *retaining* selective admission is a good thing, but by an alternative method such as a combination of progress tests and continuous assessment.

The reason I think that might be a good idea, sir, is because it is simply impossible for me to support the Education's proposals. And there are three reasons. Outside of this Assembly I have a 1165 number of business interests, and key to the success of those businesses is a risk assessment – continuous risk assessment about the products the markets, the jurisdictions, the people and so on.

Education's proposals support an unproven model. There is a complete lack of detail which, as a consequence, requires a leap of faith; and despite what the Minister for the Education 1170 Department has told us, evidence is inconclusive on selection at 11. So in short, sir, the Education Department's proposals fail a basic risk assessment. That said, I have some sympathy with the majority view of our community, which is that some form of selection should be maintained. And therefore, sir, I shall give further consider to whether an amendment should be prepared and I shall seek your guidance on that at a later date.

1175 Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Deputies Parkinson, Spruce and Adam have all been waiting a long time. I will call you in that order.

1180 **Deputy Parkinson:** Thank you, sir.

Several Members in this debate have already said that they do not believe that anything they say will change anyone's minds, and that most Members have probably decided where they stand on this issue. And on the first point I am certainly in that camp, I am sure nothing I say will change anyone's mind. But I have to say that I came into this debate very much sitting on the fence and I 1185 rather envy those, in fact, who for whatever reasons know with absolute certainty where they stand. I think the issues are very difficult and the arguments are quite finely balanced. It seems to me there are good arguments both for retaining the 11-plus and for getting rid of it; and I have yet to hear what I consider to be a knock-out blow but I have, as I will in due course explain, come to a conclusion, as I think we must.

Perhaps my detachment on this issue stems partly from the fact that I did not take the 11-plus, and I was educated at a private school, what people in England quaintly call a public school. However, I am concerned by and very interested in education matters, and for some years the education system in Guernsey was for me a great source of worry. At the top end, Guernsey schools have always performed well and our average results are on a par with the performance of 1195 schools in England; but it seems to me that our system has served poorly the pupils in the bottom quartile of the ability range. Indeed until ROSLA, the raising of the school leaving age in 2008, fully one in five Guernsey children left school with no GCSEs at all, which was simply scandalous.

1200 Now, obviously great strides have been made since then and it is very good to see that in 2014  
all three of our high schools exceeded the UK's minimum standard of 40% of pupils achieving five  
GCSEs A\* to C, including English and maths. But I share the view of members of the Education  
board that Guernsey should be doing much better than that UK benchmark, we are a  
linguistically-homogenous – or largely homogenous – society, without many of the social  
problems that would characterise the districts administered by some Local Education Authorities  
in the UK. I am therefore predisposed towards any reform that promises to improve the lot of  
1205 pupils of average, or below average, ability.

But, of course, like everyone I am looking for a win-win solution and not one in which any  
improvements for those pupils is achieved at the expense of students at the top. (**Several  
Members:** Hear, hear.) And unfortunately, although several authorities have asserted that  
academic children do just as well in all-ability schools, and indeed the Education Minister has just  
1210 repeated those claims, I have seen very little hard evidence of this. Rather, I think, the evidence  
shows that areas with selective education systems have an overall performance in line with the  
national average but the variation or dispersion between the top and the bottom is greater. For  
example, in Kent, which still has 33 grammar schools the overall performance mirrors that of  
England as a whole, but only because the inferior results of their high schools are compensated by  
1215 the excellent results of their grammar schools.

To a degree, of course, that mirrors the experience of Guernsey. However, the position in  
Guernsey is further complicated by the existence of the colleges, which might be described as  
equivalent to the UK's grant maintained schools. Now in a system where, perhaps, in Kent 25% of  
pupils attend a selective school, whereas in Guernsey it is something like 30% of pupils attend one  
1220 or other of the colleges. So even disregarding the Grammar School, Guernsey's system educates a  
lot of children in selective schools. It is sometimes claimed that the colleges are all-ability schools,  
and certainly there are a number of pupils at the colleges, like Deputy Fallaize who failed the 11-  
plus; but the fact is that both Elizabeth College and Ladies' College have entrance exams, which  
they will retain going forward, and which I cannot help thinking will become more important and  
perhaps more testing in the environment that the Education Department is seeking to develop.  
1225 Because, although the report is, frankly, very deficient in explaining how any new bursary scheme  
may work, the reality must be that where public money is scarce and is being rationed out  
between competing applicants, the process of allocating it must be fair and transparent and I see  
no other way, other than academic ability, to award funds between people who have similar  
1230 claims on a means-based test.

Now, Deputy Hadley, of course, has gone into print to say the bursaries will not be awarded on  
ability, but I absolutely cannot see what alternative there is and certainly the report does nothing  
to explain what else Education Department has in mind. So, to those who believe that high flyers  
should be separately streamed, the existence of the colleges and the promise of a bursary scheme  
1235 will seem like a good idea; while to others continuing States' support for the colleges will seem  
anomalous – and Deputy Brehaut has already made that comment. So we do not know what the  
arrangements for the new bursary scheme will be and I think in making the decisions we are  
called on to make today, we just have to assume that selective education *will* still continue to play  
a part in Guernsey's education system, whether we opt to retain the 11-plus or not.

1240 Sir, it is a truism that the key to good schools is good teachers. Ladies College famously  
teaches children in portakabins but still achieves outstanding results. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) So  
we must do all that we can to attract the best teachers to come and work here. This was an issue  
highlighted by Denis Mulkerrin in his report and several people have suggested that the present  
system in Guernsey impedes recruitment. This is the issue for me, which turns my decision in this  
1245 debate. There are several aspects of course to the problem of teacher recruitment, e.g. the slow  
progress we have made on local management of schools, the length of Housing Licences, and  
high local property prices for that matter, but it is said that the structure of our education system  
puts off some candidates.

1250 Teachers at our high schools, it is true, never have the opportunity to teach the top ability sets,  
which are not present in the high school, and indeed they cannot teach at 'A' level. This must be  
very frustrating for some of them. The Education Department proposals would go some way  
towards addressing these problems in the 11-16 age groups, and therefore might help to make  
our recruitment more successful. I am not in this sense casting any aspersions on the present  
body of teachers, who are obviously achieving good results, but frankly you can always do better.  
1255 If we can recruit better teachers, then we must make every effort to do so.

If a change in the system proved to be helpful in that regard, all of the pupils in the States'  
system would benefit. This, together with the fact that the majority of our teachers support the  
Education Department's proposals have led me finally to the conclusion that we should abolish  
the 11-plus. However, it will be vitally important in implementing the new system, that setting is  
1260 used rigorously and that any trouble makers are quarantined – if that is the right term –  
appropriately. *(Laughter)*

We have to trust our Education Department to get the implementation of any changes right,  
and let us be clear that this is something of a leap of faith, as Deputy Trott said. If it is badly  
handled the reform that is being proposed could turn out to be a disaster. But if I am willing to  
1265 make that leap of faith, I want the Education Department in return to accept a challenge.

The change will come, if it is approved, in September 2019 which gives time for the Education  
Department to further improve the performance of the high schools. I believe that a lot of the  
heat would be taken out of this debate if parents of children at the Grammar School could see the  
gap between the performance of the Grammar School and the high schools narrowing. So my  
1270 challenge to the Education Department, and indeed to the teachers who support their proposals  
is this ... sorry – *(Interjection)*

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Hadley.

1275 **Deputy Hadley:** I thank you for giving way. I would like to make two points ... *(Interjections)*  
Deputy Quin had pinched the microphone, I think, but ... *(Laughter and interjections)*

The question was asked about bursaries and I think the issue as far as the Department is  
concerned is that there is not a desire to remove the funding, suddenly, from the colleges and the  
funding is fixed to 2019. The funding consists of two elements: the grant to the colleges and also  
1280 the special places.

Now, if we are removing the special places it does not seem to us right ... alright, if we did, we  
can remove that funding for the special places, so that money has to be used in a different way. I  
think the dialogue needs to go along with the colleges and as it would be quite illogical to have  
some other form of filling those special places by selection, my own view would be that that  
1285 money, perhaps, should be used to assist those people who choose to pay to send their children  
to the colleges, but find it very challenging to meet the cost of so doing.

I think also the final point ... I have forgotten the final point you were making now to be  
honest, but on that specific point of bursaries that is a question where the Department do not feel  
they should be dictating to the colleges how that money should be used.  
1290

**Deputy Parkinson:** Well, I thank – oh, further interruption from Deputy Sillars.

**Deputy Sillars:** No, sir, I am not interrupting, I am trying to answer the question, actually the  
last question you just placed, asking for guarantees.  
1295

Of course there are no such things as guarantees, but what the Education board is so pleased  
with, is the improvement of the primary – coming out of primary in the last year or two – and the  
continuation of that; and that can only lead to better results coming through our secondary  
education. I absolutely agree with you, we are wanting to and we are desperate to, and we have  
been trying to do this for the last four years, is a real focus – and this is why we are late on other  
1300 things maybe – is to get the whole system coming up through correctly.

So it is very encouraging to see what is happening at primary, they are going on to secondary and in the next few years they will, of course, be coming out at 16 with GCSE results and absolutely, that will bring in better results than we are performing now.

1305 **Deputy Parkinson:** Well, in response to Deputy Hadley's comments the fact is this report does not explain how a future bursary scheme might work. I do think it has quite significant implications for the decisions we are actually being asked to make today. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.)

Deputy Hadley may assert that funds will be distributed amongst people who want to send their children to college but who have not got quite the means to do it. Clearly means testing will need to be part of any new bursary scheme – that, I think, is going to be agreed by everyone. But there will still be cases where people who have equal claims on a means basis to funding support and you may have more applicants, simply, than there are funds available – and I see no other way of selecting between applicants in that situation other than by, effectively, using the entrance exam marks to allocate to the most –

1315 I am sorry I am not giving way – (*Interjection*)

**Deputy Hadley:** It is a point of correction really.

The point we were making was that it is up to the colleges to decide how that money would go, and indeed my own daughter went to a public school and whilst she was at the public school won an award that paid a third of the fees.

1320

**The Bailiff:** That cannot be a point of correction, Deputy Hadley.  
Deputy Parkinson. (*Interjection*)

1325 **Deputy Parkinson:** Yes, it may well be up to the colleges, but I cannot see any way the colleges are going to allocate scarce public resources between competing claims for applicants other than on a merits basis. But that is of course a debate for the future. And as I have said, all I think we can take away for today is that there will continue to be a large number of children in Guernsey educated in selective schools.

1330 Anyway, to return to where I was, my challenge to the Education Department and the teachers who support their proposals, is simply this: get the number of pupils in the high schools attaining five GCSE's A\* to C, blah, blah, up to 60% by 2019. If you can do that, I do not think there will be an exodus of pupils to the colleges when the new schools are formed and I believe the reform may well turn out to be a success. I am confident that that standard is achievable and I hope that

1335

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Spruce.

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

1340 Members, I shall keep this reasonably brief because, as previous speakers have already said, we all know our position on this issue. I certainly do not want to put you through further sad personal experiences or history lessons covering education over the past 70 years. We have had enough of that. So, I speak only to record my opinion on selection, at this stage anyway; and to highlight my view on the Education Department's consultation exercise which I feel was a total disgrace.

1345 The Education Department heralded the consultation as a Yours Schools, Your Choice consultation. We had TV, radio, focus groups and an online crowd forum – all supposedly seeking the public's view. This approach was supposed to demonstrate the Education Department's plan to move away from their normal approach of 'decide, announce and defend' consultation, as they did with the primary school reorganisation to a new listening approach of 'debate, discuss and decide'. These are their words. Well, so much for that. It appears that this consultation's new approach went more like, 'We have consulted, we have ignored your view and we have decided what we want.'

1350

So, let's look at the facts. Please go to page 1500 in the Billet, clause 2.7 and listen to this Education Department's statement. I will read this clause because it beggars belief:

'The public consultation was designed to provide a chance for the population of Guernsey and interested parties to have their say, but ...'

1355 Now just digest this next statement about the consultation:

'... but was not designed to be an all-encompassing statistical survey and was not set up to ensure a representative sample of Islanders' views.'

So what was it for? You may as well ignore all the detail in these Appendixes, they are not representative and even if they were, the outcomes have been ignored.

1360 Now go to page 1501, clause 2.9, this clearly says that the Young People's Survey also had a clear preference for retaining the 11-plus as it is now. And now listen to this other bold statement from the following clause, 2.10:

'The Department has considered the response from the consultation and concluded that there is a weight of opinion that admission to secondary education should no longer be based on the 11-plus process.'

How that conclusion can have been reached from this consultation process and these facts, is a total mystery to me. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) What we are provided with is a very selective use of the facts being taken from a consultation process that was, and this is their words again, a consultation process that

'... was not set up to ensure a representative sample of Islanders' views.'

1365 So, as I say, you may as well ignore the consultation process and any justification the Department are presenting. The reality is the Education board have just taken it upon themselves to design the system entirely of their own making and have paid no credence to any responses provided.

1370 Now moving on to the 11-plus issue specifically. I ask you to reject this amendment and support St Pier A2. I am in favour of selection at 11 because, and only because, we have no other option on the table. I believe that the 11-plus exam is a bit of a blunt stick approach, but I firmly believe that the selection process we have at least enables the most academically gifted students to progress at a pace more suited to their ability. I just do not accept the argument that a more sophisticated option of assessment cannot be devised.

1375 For those students that missed the cart on exam week, for whatever reason, there should always be another chance to move on if the student is capable. Surely the Education Department can decide who are borderline cases and allow movement at 12, 13, 14 – what is there to stop them introducing an improved system?

1380 Many people have commented on the fact that life is finished if you fail the 11-plus – this is a totally ridiculous statement because many people make their way in life without having passed the 11-plus. I like Deputy Trott failed my 11-plus and I feel that I have made a fairly decent contribution –

1385 **Deputy Trott:** I did not fail it; I was not allowed to take it.

**Deputy Spruce:** Sorry, you did not take it – I failed it – (*Interjections*)

**Deputy Trott:** Although your outcome was probably correct!

1390 **Deputy Spruce:** Well I feel my outcome, even though I failed the 11-plus, has been reasonably good.

1395 It is a fact that this consultation exercise was not representative. It is also a fact that of those that did respond to the consultation exercise, more were in favour of retaining the 11-plus system. So, I ask you why would you change a proven and successful system, just because this board has a bias against the 11-plus?

I would ask you to try to persuade this board to improve the outcomes for students that do not go through a selection system and pass through to Grammar School, which is a fine institution. More effort should be put on raising the standards in the secondary schools – that is where the focus should be.

1400 Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Adam.

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

1405 To a certain extent, sir, I came here thinking I had made up my mind, but in the last week or so I have been much more hesitant and less positive. When I was working it really did not worry me about the 11-plus, whether it was there or not. I was fortunate, you might say, and I passed it; I think Deputy Laurie Queripel said he passed his 20 years ago, but unfortunately mine was a bit longer than 20 years ago. My son passed the 11-plus and he went to Grammar School for his education.

1410 But when this hit me so hard was when I came into this Assembly in March 2001 and the first major issue was a debate in April on the organisation of secondary education and the 11-plus. At the time my views were influenced by the public consultation which had a narrow majority for ending selection; and the consensus of local teachers who were in favour of ending selection, apart from the majority of those working in the Grammar School. Another significant influence was an experienced educational psychologist who had worked for nine years in secondary and primary schools in Glasgow, which had a broad spectrum of social background, and also who had been employed for 10 years at a dyslexia centre and therefore worked with children in various schools across the Island. Some of you may realise that person also influences me significantly as she is my wife – and you have to listen to your wife, sometimes. For that first debate I ended up supporting the ending of selection.

1420 As many people have said, assessment of ability of 11 is not a reliable predictor of achievement or of academic performance in later life. That is well recognised; the 11-plus exam is ineffectual. There may have been value in separating pupils when the curriculum, exams and methods of teaching were different in the old secondary modern school and grammar schools. But now we are 50 years further on there is less value, because the curriculum is probably similar in all 11-16 schools on the Island. When GCSEs are the common exam and when modern teaching in all the schools focuses on individual learning styles across all ability levels.

1430 However, to counter that, over the years I have come to understand the strength of feeling about the value to Guernsey maintaining both the Grammar School and the colleges. This may have been the reason Education's plans were derailed in 2001 by the Torode amendment – the legacy of which the Education Department has adhered to over the past 15 years, certainly in relation to building new secondary schools and this type of thing.

1435 The place of the colleges within Guernsey's education system, the funding and the selection procedures have *still* to be addressed. I feel that Education may have weakened their case for ending the 11-plus selection, by not defining alternatives to the special placeholder scheme, as Deputy James suggested in her speech. We wish to allow families of modest means to access a college education if that is their wish, and we have had the discussion between Deputy Hadley and Deputy Parkinson about bursaries and how you would select these people – entrance exams would be the obvious thing and they would have to be on ability. But we should be trying to get families of modest means who wish that type of education for their child to have the ability and motivation to achieve the ethos of the colleges.

Therefore, as I said, I came to this debate thinking I would support ending of selection, but after reading all the emails and listening to the debate, I see there *is* an argument for retaining the *status quo*. So, sir, I am afraid to say I still have not made up my mind. (*Laughter*)  
1445 Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Brouard.

1450 **Deputy Brouard:** Thank you, sir.

For me, I think, the best speech this morning was Deputy Parkinson. He summed up my position absolutely spot on, and I think, although he slid very slowly down the fence on one side, I think I am probably going to slide slowly down the fence on the other side – but exactly the same arguments hold good.

1455 I am not precious over the 11-plus, but what I am precious about – and I did not even go to the school – is the loss of the Grammar School. (**Several Members:** Hear, hear.) If we can find some way that the high schools are respected and their infrastructure and their teaching and their results are as good as, that would do it for me. And I want to see the standard of all the schools raised not, for some reason, the Grammar School being taken down and that is the dilemma that I  
1460 have – and that has not been articulated in Education’s proposals.

The more amendments we have – and we have not seen the end of them by *any* means, so there is still a chance for the Deputy Fallaize overnighters to come in – that is where Education have lost. They are losing control of their report, they have lost the wheel. That is because the report lacked in the detail and it is coming up at the 11th hour in a rush.

1465 The other issue I have with the schools – and I think it is something again which Education are starting to tackle, and we need to tackle more – is not only the opportunities in the classroom from the teachers, it is helping the children who have had a different background and a different set of rules from the other children in the classroom. That is where it comes in for strengthening parents right at the very beginning with the help of the pre-school, because there are some  
1470 children in the class who do not particularly want to be there; and it is being able to have the resources in place to give the children that motivation to help them, so that they do not disrupt the rest of the class. And I know we have the Le Voies and places like that, that Education are working with, but I think that is one of the key aspects that more emphasis needs to be put on, because I think that is ... a lot of fear for a lot of parents is that in some classes the disruptive  
1475 children are causing a nuisance for the others. And it is not necessarily the disruptive children’s fault at all, it is how they have got there and some of the support that they have had over the years has not been there when they have gone home.

And, unlike most of us around this room, when my daughter comes home to do her homework I am there, so you do your homework first and then it is a meal, and then it is this, and then have  
1480 you done your homework before you go in? For some children they do not have that support and they do not have that help, and so it is not their fault that they have not done their French homework, or whatever it is in class, it is because they did not have that parental support and their parents probably themselves did not have in their day that parental support. Education need to really grasp that nettle.

1485 And Deputy Spruce is absolutely right, there must be some way that we can get the high schools and the grammar schools to integrate more together. Why not have children swapping at 14, if one of them finds that they have got a more of an academic bent? What happens if someone at the Grammar School actually finds that there are more vocational studies that fit them better, and that they need to move to the high school? That, I thought, was the whole idea  
1490 of the Grammar School and the high schools coming together, but I do not really see that in Education’s proposals. They seem to be losing something with the Grammar School and I cannot see what they are gaining. Now perhaps they have got that vision but they have just not articulated it in their report.

1495 And this is completely off beam, sir, but I can well understand, if I was a primary school head and you have the children up to age 11 ... (*Interjection and laughter*) I do not know whether I am being attacked, sir, or not. (*Laughter*) Sorry, sir.

1500 If I was a primary school head I am responsible for the children up to age 11, and then there is some sort of test, or selection process, of which 75% of the parents that I have been looking after their children for, are probably going to be unhappy at the result. Why would I want to carry on being in that position if I was a primary school head? So what other goals are we going to put in place for those primary schools to make sure that the academic learning and the motivation of those children is right up high? I do not have that answer, but I do not find it in Education's paper anyway.

1505 Now, Deputy Fallaize, who may be very close in some ways to the schoolchildren, having only just left, (*Laughter and interjections*) but for some of us who have been round the block a bit, there is something about – if you have ever worked in a pyramidal hierarchical structure which you have in schools – Director of Education, chief head master, head master, chief primary head master, second lieutenant primaries ... and as it goes down. Have you ever tried as one of those members, in one of those hierarchical organisations, to actually go against the grain of the flow that is coming down from the top? Just remember the days of the Royal Bank of Scotland and the sycophants who were around them as they brought that company to its knees, because none of them had the power to ...

1515 The other thing the Minister mentioned as well – again, I am picking up just some random points, said about they had not forced primary school teachers to say anything and I can understand that. But when you have been in a pyramidal organisation, you have got to be very brave and very bold, to sometimes stand against the flow. We have had emails coming through from teachers who say actually they would love to see the retention of the Grammar School.

1520 When Education say that they have not sought praise, or something, Deputy Sherbourne very kindly sent us the NUT from Mr Andy Woolley with their support, but unfortunately when he sent the email he also sent the trail that went with it – and if you read the earlier trail, it was saying, 'I hope you are going to be putting in some good words for us and supporting our proposals.'

1525 So if that is not encouraging people to come forward, I do not know what is. I am not saying it is wrong, because who does not do these sort of things when you are trying to get your proposals through. But please do not come here as snow white, we are in that way –

**Deputy Sillars:** Sir, as a point of correction.

1530 On the NUT, it is their national policy, what I actually repeated twice in my various speeches, so it had nothing to do with what we may or may not have said to them. It is their national policy and actually their international policy.

**A Member:** There is still the trail.

**Deputy Brouard:** Members have got the trail. The trail is there, their help in this matter was being sought.

1535 So, there we are, sir, I hope... I am looking for the Holy Grail, I am hoping somebody, and I am hoping Deputy Fallaize will come to the rescue with one of his magic amendments. I am struggling with this, I am not precious over the 11-plus, I would be very sorry to lose the Grammar School – and God, don't we all want the best for our children and the best for our high school?

**(A Member:** Hear, hear.)

1540 Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Green.

**Deputy Green:** Sir, thank you.

1545 I certainly do not approach the issue of selection from a dogmatic or ideological position, I approach it from a practical position.

When I joined the Education board in May of 2012, I had no particular predetermined view on this. The main reason and the main driver for me, personally, to join the Education Committee in 2012 was to ensure that we ended up with a universal pre-school policy, which I am very pleased  
1550 that we managed to do. But in relation to selection, sir, my starting point is that I am not against educational or academic selection *per se* or in principle. I also think that the 11-plus mechanism used to be a very effective tool in the education system, both locally and further afield, for spreading opportunity.

Many people have said in this debate already, and I concur with what they said, that selection  
1555 is without doubt a part of life – it is inevitable that there is selection in life, any job interview or public election, for that matter, is a selective process. However, I have gradually come to the conclusion over the last few years, after much anxious consideration I might add, and no doubt perhaps to the irritation of some of my board colleagues, who had got there before me, that the way in which the 11-plus has operated in practice in Guernsey of late, has led me to believe that  
1560 the present system is no longer appropriate for the Island, even if it was in the past a *bona fide* way of spreading opportunity and enabling social mobility.

I am not going to say too much about the problems with the system, but I think the problems associated with the 11-plus of today are obvious. There is a degree of consensus on that, at least, but I will just touch on a few of them. I think the most powerful argument, sir, is that first of all it is  
1565 extraordinarily difficult to effectively gauge true potential, or ability, at 10 or 11 based on only two exams, when clearly all children develop and mature at different rates. I am still hoping that I am a late developer myself, sir. (*Laughter*) So the 11-plus is not a reliable test of potential, in my view. But, neither is it currently particularly fair.

Now, much has been mentioned already in this debate about coaching and tutoring and I will  
1570 say a bit about this. The use of coaching by some parents – and I would say, sir, very clearly, in itself it is a perfectly rational thing for those parents to do within the system that we currently have, and nobody can dispute that in my view. But the use of coaching by some parents does undoubtedly tend to militate against equality of educational opportunity, because some parents and some children will never have the option of funding that coaching or tutoring; and it is that  
1575 process of tutoring which helps with the familiarisation of children with particular questions and the particular test. That is the real issue. So, it is not reliable, and it is not fair.

We know from the facts and from the statistics that we have seen, that it is not particularly a good vehicle anymore. It may have been in the past – it undoubtedly was in the past – but it is no longer a good vehicle for social mobility. The social mobility argument tied to the 11-plus system  
1580 does not stack up. We have seen how few States House and social housing children have been getting selected for the Grammar School and for the colleges in recent years. That was not the case in the past but it is now.

Now of course, many people have talked about alternative systems in terms of selection at 11, and alternative systems of selection at 11 were considered by Education, but the fact is, the simple  
1585 reality is, it is genuinely very difficult to find an alternative selective approach that would be more credible in terms of its reliability, and in terms of its assessment of potential abilities, as Deputy Fallaize said earlier, than what we have now. That is the key, there is nothing there that is more credible than what we have now.

Now, I would like to address the issue of the public consultation. I would like to make an  
1590 apology, sir, because I think the title was a misjudgement (*Interjections*) Your Schools, Your Choice. A number of speakers have made this point and I did not disagree with the essence of what was being said. It was a misjudgement to call the process that, it clearly was; it did imply that we would accept the results and the statistics in terms of a particular policy direction without question, and that was naïve and it was a misjudgement. I apologise for that without qualification.

1595 It is worth saying, sir, that the public consultation, which of course was in no way a binding public referendum in any sense on these issues, even if it was a very useful tool for gauging the

mood of different interest groups. That public consultation did indicate that some 70% of respondents – that is 70% of the respondents to the public consultation who had been in favour of some form of academic selection for admission to secondary schools – had not wanted to see the current 11-plus system continue as it is today, and that is very significant in my view.

1600 So moreover in a word, the 11-plus system of today is fundamentally flawed. In my view, Mr Bailiff, Guernsey requires an education system that is not the *status quo*, but neither does it need some 1960's or 1970's-style comprehensive parody based essentially on lower aspirations, low attainment, limited choice and no account being taken of children's differing abilities. Instead, sir, I would say that our Island needs all-in schooling, which clearly identifies the distinct abilities of all individual pupils, and organises them in set classes to maximise their progress in individual subjects, and also requires proper selection for pathways at Key Stage 4 based on things like aptitude and ability, as Deputy Conder very expertly dissected this morning.

1605 In summary, sir, I think we can combine excellence and quality with, on the other hand, opportunity for all within a future system – and that is the goal, that should be the goal of policy makers in this Island. In a nutshell it needs a modified selective approach.

1610 So I will be supporting amendment A1, as that will entail a move away from the 11-plus system, and move to a feeder system from primary schools. But I say again, that system absolutely has to have wide spread setting viability from year seven onwards, which to my mind is actually a form of selection within schools. We can delve into the semantics too far, but I think class setting is a form of selection within schools rather than without. And as long as you have that from Year 7 onwards, and as long as you have selection for individual pathways from Year 9 onwards as part of the educational furniture, then I absolutely accept the case for the move away from the 11-plus.

1615 Just to pick up on what Deputy Brouard was saying a moment ago: we have the potential in this Island to have, in effect, four grammar schools. The highest ability range who are currently being educated in the Grammar school, will be under our proposals allocated into the other four, possibly three schools – we will come to that debate later. You will have that within those schools, you will have the potential here to have four grammar schools rather than just one.

1620 Sir, in the final analysis it is not the label that you put on a school, whether you call it a high school, or a grammar school, or a comprehensive school, or a secondary modern school or whatever you call it, that label is not what is truly important. What is much more important, is the quality of the teaching and learning and the excellent leadership of a good head teacher within a school.

1625 I pause just to mention and refer to the excellent inspection report that La Mare de Carteret High School has had, which is a prime example of good quality teaching and learning and excellent leadership that we have already in our schools. Given that reality, sir, let's support amendment A1 to allow the next Education Committee to focus relentlessly on driving up standards, through that quality teaching and quality leadership, and not to be hamstrung by the burdens of the outmoded 11-plus system.

1630 Removing selection is not the end objective of the Education Vision, sir, but it is one individual means to that end objective.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Paint.

1640 **Deputy Paint:** Sir, I really stand to support and if necessary defend what Deputy Perrot said yesterday. I believe that the truth hurts sometimes, but it has got to come out. When 61% of respondents of a consultation want to retain the 11-plus that is a good number over 50% – so what are we supposed to do? Listen to them or just ignore them? I do not feel that they should be ignored, but the Education Department appear to have twisted these results to suit their own particular way of thinking.

1645 We see many totally contested decisions in this Assembly, but democracy always rules the day – just by one vote at times. That means that the decisions made in this Assembly are okay. But when the public informs us what they want, with 61%, that is not okay. Something is wrong there.

1650 Fear of failing: what is the fear of failing? Is it by the child when it feels it is letting down its parents? Is it by the parents, that they feel the child might not have been able to pass the exam? There is a thing that I have used all my life – because I failed many things, including the 11-plus – it is better to try and fail than not try at all. If you fail just keep going and you will get there in the end.

1655 If you want to take the 11-plus you can, or you do not have to – it is as simple as that. You have a choice and if you pass the 11-plus by taking it, you do not have to go to the Grammar School or the colleges, you can go to any one of the secondary schools – so you have got a massive choice. One person that is very dear to me failed his 11-plus and he went then to the College of Further Education and eventually he passed as an accountant. It is possible. In my day there was not that. If you failed the 11-plus you had to make your own life, which I did, which I will come to in a minute. But the openings are there with the College of Further Education for all aspects of further education. So I am a great believer in the College of Further Education and a supporter of them.

1660 Experts: you hear of all these experts ... well I am fast running out of patience with experts. They tell you what they think you want to hear in most cases; and of course you can challenge what they say anyway. I note that in the UK grammar schools are starting to come back into force, quite a few places are starting to open grammar schools because that is what the people want. *(Interjection)* Oh yes.

1670 **Deputy Fallaize:** I am grateful to Deputy Paint for giving way. When he says quite a few places are reopening, or rebuilding grammar schools, can he tell us where they are? Which ones these are?

1675 **Deputy Paint:** Not by name but I see on the news – I take it you do not listen to the *BBC News*, I take it you do not listen to anything like that?

**Deputy Fallaize:** Yes, sir, I listen to the *BBC*.

1680 **Deputy Paint:** Then you will see that places, I think in Wales, I think in the Midlands in England are starting to open new grammar schools. Well, if I am wrong, I stand corrected.

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

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Sherbourne.

1685 **Deputy Sherbourne:** You would expect this, I suspect.

There have been no new grammar schools opened in the UK since 1970. The only schools that are actually in the public arena with regard to grammar school expansion are in one or two local authorities that actually have already got selection, and they are applying for extensions of their current schools.

1690 That has been turned down, currently, by the Government, but the actual debate at the moment is on whether those extensions will be allowed. No new schools have been built – no grammar school has been built since the 1970's and there are no plans for them.

1695 **Deputy Paint:** Well, sir, if that is the case I must have heard the news wrong and I will stand corrected on the matter. If people are trying to reopen grammar schools in their own right there must be some account for that, the Government again failed them.

1700 Sir, I am not a product of the 11-plus, I failed miserably, whether I took it or not I cannot remember, but I must have failed because I did not go anywhere! *(Laughter)* But I must say that when I was at school I did not have the slightest bit of interest in education of any sort, I felt my freedom had been taken away by having to go to school, but the Law said I had to. I did not bunk

off much, but there you go. It was only later in life that I realised that if I did not get a qualification of some sort, that I would end up as a labourer, okay? So I found a way to do it and there is always ways to do it, and in those days you had to start at the bottom line, which is on the deck of ships and work your way up, which I did, and you all know my history.

1705 So this failing: you do not fail, nobody fails at anything, the secret is to keep going and you will get there in the end. That is what I believe and that is what I will state to all, if you fail going to Grammar then you can do it another way. So why break something that isn't broken?

Thank you, sir.

1710 **The Bailiff:** I had indicated I would call Deputy Gillson; I will come to Deputy Hadley after that.

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

1715 My speech will be in two parts, because the first part I will speak with my hat on as Chairman of Ladies' College. The Ladies' College, along with Elizabeth College and Blanchelande, have been and remain neutral with regard to the question of the 11-plus as a method of selecting special place holders. All three colleges strongly believe that the colleges should be inclusive, and there must be arrangements in place to enable students from families of lesser means to be able to access a college education.

1720 To that end the three colleges are open to a bursary model; in fact indeed, the three colleges have been working together for a couple of years now in designing a working bursary scheme, a process which involved KPMG to assist us. And I know Education have also produced an outline structure of a bursary scheme. Now, a number of people have said that we cannot make a decision because nothing has been agreed with the colleges. Well actually the position of the colleges – and I think I mentioned this yesterday – is that the appropriate time to discuss the details of a bursary scheme is when the States have made a final decision regarding selection or not. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) So the colleges are content with the position we are in now. So, that is with my college hat on.

1730 Now I will just speak on a personal basis. I just want to correct a couple of things that people have said. Deputy Trott mentioned a leap of faith and we must not take them. Well I think Zero-10, which he led, was a huge leap of faith (*Laughter*). The right one at the time, but still. The Minister of Education made a statement which I think does need slight correction; he said that the Education Department has saved £6.6 million from their budget – that is not strictly accurate. What happened is they have saved £5.5 million from their budget, which is 8%, the colleges have saved £1.1 million from their budget, which is a 25% saving. So Education has only saved £5½ million from their actual general revenue budget.

1740 Turning to the issues of the 11-plus. I think generally there is evidence and I said this the previous time, pretty well both ways. There are examples of good grammar schools in the UK; there are examples of poor grammar schools. Good comprehensives, poor comprehensives. But I also accept something which Deputy Conder mentioned at a couple of meetings, very, very eloquently, that the grammar system and the 11-plus were designed in the 40's at a point when education was very different. That was a time when people left school at the age of 14 and the only way to anything like higher education, or further education, was through passing the 11-plus.

1745 Now, I took the 11-plus, and like Deputy Duquemin the first I remember, or I knew about taking it, was you got into the class and the desks were in a different order. So there was no pressure, there was no stress, we just turned up, different order, took a test and went off into the playground. I passed, I went to Grammar and at that time it did have a very different education emphasis to Beaucamps, where I would have gone. It was more academic, I think in those days we took GCEs and there were CSEs, completely different exams of a completely different nature. So there was a completely different educational structure between the two schools.

1750 So, for me a key question which I would like from, I assume Deputy Sherbourne is going to sum up on behalf of Education, is: is there currently a different educational emphasis between Grammar and the high schools? Do they offer different curriculum focus? I appreciate they may

1755 offer different subjects, because all the schools offer slightly different subjects, but the key question is: do the Grammar School and the high schools offer structurally and significantly different curriculum focuses? Because if they do then there is a very good academic reason for keeping selection. If, however, the educational focus and the educational offering of the Grammar is effectively the same as the high schools, there is a slightly different perspective on things. So I look forward to the summing up and the answer to that question.

Thank you.

1760

**The Bailiff:** Does anyone have a very short speech? It is getting very close to 12.30 p.m.

General speeches are averaging about 10 to 15 minutes. So if somebody has a short one, we will have it now.

Deputy Le Clerc.

1765

**Deputy Le Clerc:** Yes, sir, mine is a very short speech.

It is about failure. It is a very personal speech. And I know people have said they do not want to hear about the history but I think the history is why I am actually here today and part of this Assembly. So I am just picking up on some of the comments.

1770

I can only give my own personal experience and can say that throughout my life I have felt that in Guernsey, in particular, I have been judged by the fact I failed the 11-plus and went to a secondary school. When I visited St Andrew's School recently, when they were just about to close the school, I showed my partner the exact spot where the headmaster, Mr Gill, told me I was going to Les Beaucamps. That memory has stayed with me forever and that was my memory of that school.

1775

However, I can also say I had the most wonderful experience at St Peter Port School. Deputy Laurie Queripel has already said we were both at that school together and I am proud that both of us are here in this Assembly today together with Deputy Sherbourne who was, without doubt, one of the best mentors that any pupil could have. But despite what some would regard as a successful career, I still have a chip on my shoulder about failing the 11-plus.

1780

I will share with you a quick story about a very, very close friend, who said, 'Michelle, you went to St Peter Port School and they taught you how to change a plug. I went to Elizabeth College and they taught me how to write a cheque to pay someone to change a plug!' (*Laughter*) And that has had a lasting memory on me. But, I can at least, change a plug.

1785

As I said I think that is why I am here today, I am always trying to prove that I am equal to those who passed their 11-plus. But despite how I have felt for 40 years, I am still reluctant to get rid of the 11-plus system, because I still felt for all those years it was right for Guernsey. However, during the past few years I have come to see that the way we select at 11 is unfair and does not give an opportunity to all.

1790

I go into Amherst – and I have been going in to Amherst for the last six years – and those pupils still talk about pass and fail. After all these years it comes down to those few words – pass and fail.

Please, I urge you to support the amendment A1, and remove those words from those children's mouths – pass and fail – because, as I say, after all these years I still feel a failure. (*Applause*)

1795

**The Bailiff:** We will resume at 2.30 p.m.

*The Assembly adjourned at 12.32 p.m.  
and resumed its sitting at 2.30 p.m.*

**The Future Structure of Secondary and Post-16 Education –  
Debate continued**

1800 **The Bailiff:** We continue with debate on the amendments A1 and A2 proposed by Deputy St Pier, seconded by Deputy Perrot.  
Deputy Hadley, I had indicated I would call you next.

**Deputy Hadley:** Mr Bailiff.

1805 I would like to start by responding to the emotive speech by Deputy Perrot and his assertion that the Education board is going to close the Grammar School. It was interesting to hear his views on education which clearly have not been updated since he was, as he described, struggling with his algebra homework. We are *not* going to close the Grammar School. As it is such a centre of excellence, such a good school, why would we? We are only going to make it available to a  
1810 wider diversity of students. The sixth form will be completely unchanged and we have no plans to change any of the staff. It may turn out that because of the planned improvements to the education system in time it may have more students from across the Island in the sixth form.

The only change that we are going to make to the Grammar School is that in 2019, for the first time, the first year group in the school will be of mixed academic ability and will arrive at the  
1815 school from Vauvert and Amherst Primary Schools. These pupils will be in sets according to their ability in that subject. There will still be a top maths set for all those students who excel at mathematics, just as now. The change will be that there will also be a set where the students struggle to understand mathematics, there may well be some who struggle with algebra and who may well be helped by students in the top set. So, yes, the big change is that there will be some  
1820 students at the Grammar who are less academically able overall.

However, I believe that the school will be better all round for the greater mix of abilities and social backgrounds that will be in the school. It will not be a cultural change for those in the first pioneering year, because they will all have learnt together in their years at Vauvert and Amherst; and I for one, can testify that Vauvert was an excellent school, my children went there a decade  
1825 ago, and now more recently they have excellent validation reports.

I do find it strange that people suggest from time to time, that we should not alter the system until our high schools have the same results as the Grammar School, because of course while the Grammar School is taking off the children that have the greatest ability, that is clearly not going to be the case.

1830 In the past, if I were to have been asked my views of the 11-plus, I would have supported it but with some misgivings, still believing that the current system provided a sound education for the best of our children. But my year on the Education board has dispelled any faith I may have had in the selection process. I, like my fellow board members, have examined the evidence provided to us by many reports. I have listened to the views of our head teachers who in both the secondary  
1835 school and the primary school, are unanimous in their opposition to the retention of the 11-plus. And as has been said by other speakers today, the final year at the primary school has its teaching programme skewed by the time taken up with the 11-plus examination, to the detriment of teaching as a whole, and the first year of a secondary education is partially devoted to helping students regain their confidence.

1840 The Principal of the College of Further Education, teaching young adults who have failed the 11-plus, and then may have failed or done badly at GCSEs, which then restricts their ability to access higher level courses, has told the board that her students suffer from the knock-on effects of one blow after another, leaving her staff to pick them up and try to instil confidence in them to excel in other areas.

1845 Finally, and perhaps more importantly, it is not a good measure of determining a child's academic potential. It only, as others have said, determines their ability to pass the examination, on a particular day, at a specific time. Some children will fail because they are still too immature to take the examination, while for others it was just a bad day. Others still will have had less training

1850 to take the examination than their fellows. It makes no sense at all to have all-ability schools at the age of 11, separate them from 11 to 16, and then merge them back together.

Reference has been made to the increasing level of mental health in children. I think the statistic is one in 25 take some form of antidepressant, and this has gone up 30% or 50%. It is interesting that when Professor Graham of the Institute of Child Health gave a lecture on this Island he gave us an example of the stress that caused the increase in antidepressants, which was the 11-plus examination. So to remove the stress, to improve our health system, I urge Members to support this amendment.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Soulsby.

1860 **Deputy Soulsby:** Sir, before I start, I need to declare an interest, my daughter is a special place holder at Ladies' College and my son is at the Grammar School, but both will not be affected by these proposals if they get passed.

1865 Sir, as expected there are many here who have strong views about the 11-plus, both for and against – and these positions have been expressed well, yesterday and today. It is hardly surprising, given that there is an abundance of material on the matter and that anyone can provide evidence as to support their point of view. Indeed, I believe there is a whole industry dedicated to providing information to support a particular viewpoint and I think many educationalists have done very well indeed out of such debate over the years. And really that is the point; there is no overwhelming evidence either way to say whether the 11-plus is better or worse than no selection at all.

1870 So as someone who has not nailed her colours to the mast of the 11-plus, or alternatively said scrap it altogether, I find it very difficult to determine the best thing to do. Perhaps that reflects my experiences. I was brought up by a mother who was a teacher and she made it very clear from early on how she believed that the 11-plus should go. I did attend a grammar school myself which, at the time I was there, the teachers were working to rule in the likes of the late 70's and early 80's. And I have a child, as I just said, at the Grammar School, who has blossomed there.

1875 I hear what my good friend Deputy Le Clerc said just before lunch and I do not think we should look at those personal experiences, but rather what is in the best interests of the Island as a whole. For me, how I vote focuses around two claims: the first is the limitation and long-term impact on children, and the other is about the shortcomings of the exam itself. I am going to focus more on the former.

1880 Equality of opportunity, that is the big buzz word, that the 11-plus does not provide equality of opportunity. This was said by all those who support the 11-plus and the reasoning seems to be around restriction of access to the curriculum – or that is the only thing I have really picked up from the debate. Now that sounds reasonable. I mean if you cannot get access to the course you want, then that is not equality of access. But I have been scratching my head as to why and how that means the solution is to scrap the 11-plus.

1890 Will it be possible to offer all subjects under the system Education proposes? I just cannot actually imagine how that can be done. I think it would be a logistical nightmare of managing a timetable across four separate sites and I do not think that it will actually be possible for every child to go on all the courses it wants to do – particularly those children who have a wide ability range, not just science, but who are clever in all manner of different subjects.

1895 Now, in terms of social housing, I have been trying to get to the bottom of why there are such low numbers of children from social housing that go to the Grammar and colleges. We are told that they are low, but no explanation. However, it is an argument made to demonstrate inequality of opportunity. This is looked at in paragraph 7.8 where it states that in a three-year period, of the 230 children in social housing only three went to the Grammar. That is just over 1% – and that is low.

1900 But it goes on to say that the teachers only assessed 31 out of the 230 as being capable of going to either the Grammar or colleges. So that is just 13%. However, the top 25 from any year

go to the Grammar or colleges. And I have not heard anyone today explain that difference and why it is the 11-plus that is to blame. Doesn't that demonstrate the equality of opportunity does not exist before Year 6?

1905 Is it the primary school system? We hear that it is wonderful – and my experience is that they are wonderful – they are mixed ability and no-one has a bad word to say for them; or is it the family circumstances of those children? This is something that demonstrates the importance of the 1001 Days Programme. We need to sort things out before the children even get to school. I do see that the numbers from social housing are less than those in the private sector, but is this because the 11-plus concept is at fault?

1910 Now, in terms of setting, I do understand that setting can be a solution, although the report is very vague on this. There will be a difference actually between setting within the Grammar School and high schools and setting in mixed-ability schools – we have got a difference between setting students across four mixed-ability schools. Taking the top 25% of a distribution and setting that gives you much tighter ability levels in each set, rather than the comprehensive model that takes the whole distribution and divides it up into sets, resulting in much wider ability levels in each set. 1915 Of course the alternative will be to have more sets and perhaps therefore that is a solution. And I say if the amendment A1 is passed, I would support any amendment which might consider setting, because I think that will be essential. But it is not the same setting in the current system as it would be with mixed-ability schools.

1920 Deputy St Pier did mention a possible amendment that I *may* wish to lay related to gifted and talented children, and I would hope to if the Presiding Officer is so minded to allow it. But I did not want to distribute this before this debate as I think it would be confusing as it is not about setting and not connected to whether or not there is selection.

1925 Now, geography: one issue that has not been clarified is whether the results will be published by campus or as one school. Frankly I think the public will demand it by campus. Well I think the Housing Minister might quite like that as it could well stimulate the housing market, with parents moving to the most desirable catchment area – something that has been done in respect of primary schools. Of course, those in social housing are not able to make those same choices. So they will have selection but based on geographic accident – or perhaps not – of where our 1930 parents are, rather than ability.

In terms of mental health, another commonly-cited problem is that the 11-plus can cause mental health issues. I can understand that a child who does not get a Grammar School place may *wrongly* see themselves as failures. It is hard not getting what you want and looking like you are not as good as someone else. However, as Deputy Minister of HSSD, when I heard that children were being damaged by the system and the claims that have been made, I did think it was beholden on me to find out more. The response I got from the mental health service was that they have come across children over the years who have attributed low self-esteem, anxiety and low mood to failure at the 11-plus, but often there are many other factors which contribute to the development of children's mental health disorders – so it is difficult to say there is a direct link. 1935

1940 Interestingly, though, they are seeing a rise in the number of young people presenting with low mood, anxiety, self-harm and eating disorders as a result of exam pressures around GCSEs and A Levels. I would hope the initiative under the CYPP that we debated two weeks ago will help alleviate this. However, clearly for some it will be upsetting to not get to the Grammar or colleges, and I know that many, like Deputy Duquemin, consider this a very important point.

1945 Just relating back to Deputy Brehaut's comments that you only get tested once, you can only take this exam once, and everything else you ever do is not at all or nothing like the 11-plus. But going for a job and getting it or not, that is all or nothing; and degrees and post-graduate qualifications are limited if not by the institution, then certainly in terms of money.

1950 So finally, more briefly, turning to the argument on the structural problems of the 11-plus, we do hear that in the last two years more girls than boys have attended the Grammar School, there is a minority from social housing and that many children are coached. Can't these issues be dealt with through changing the structure rather than getting rid of it totally?

1955 Now, on this, I thought I would look at my old school's website. It is still a grammar, but now has the benefit of being a locally-managed Academy school with humanities college status, rated as outstanding by OFSTED at its last review – it has certainly done better than when I was there, but that might be a reflection of me more than the school.

I was interested to find out all its policies are published on the website and that includes its equality objectives. These are based around equality of access, equality of provision and equality of outcome; and in relation to the former it has the following policies

'To give preference to students on free school meals in the admission border zone.

To ensure the 11-plus reading test does not have a 'middle class' bias.

To set a test that restricts the benefit of an 11-plus tutor.

To ensure that all explicit/implicit information provided by the school is class/income neutral –

1960 – open evenings, written correspondence, telephone contact, etc.

1965 It has found that the number of free school meal students at that school has risen by 6% to 8% in the last two years, directly through the actions that that school has taken. So these policies have increased a proportion of children of free school meals – it can be done. So we can look at the inadequacies of our current system, but that does not mean that we should throw, as Deputy Perrot said yesterday, the baby out with the bathwater.

1970 Now, I suppose to me the most important issue is not about equality of opportunity but fairness, which is part of the criteria that the Department is said to have considered. Is it fair that every child gets the same education rather than the education that fits them? We do not have a failing system. All the schools are doing very well, or so we are told, so why would we want to throw everything up in the air and hope that a bespoke, untried system will work better, when we do not know what better is?

This is the issue for me and I wish I did have the strong ideological viewpoints that others in this room do have, it would make life so much easier. But I just do not see that getting rid of the 11-plus will lead to Nirvana. For that reason I cannot support A1 but will have to support A2.

1975 **A Member:** Hear, hear.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy O'Hara.

1980 **Deputy O'Hara:** Thank you, sir.

1985 I will be relatively brief. There have been many excellent speeches typifying personal and technical issues. I have enjoyed them all. I should first declare an interest in education issues in that I have been for the last 30 years, since its inception, the Chairman of Dyslexia Day Centre and that we receive a grant to provide tuition to dyslexic pupils throughout the school primary education system.

1990 Sir, one of the results of being a Member of the States for a reasonable time is that you tend to hear repeated debates on various policies. Education is a perfect example. Some 15 years ago when I was involved in debating the 11-plus subject as a member of the Education Council at that time, the debate was very thorough and the same opinions discussed then are almost identically the same as those being expressed in this present debate. The difference of course is that education some 15 years ago was totally different than that of today, with different approaches to tuition.

1995 At that time I was against the 11-plus. However, my thoughts were that assessment in some form of selection would be far better at the age of 13. My feelings still remain the same. Again at that time I sought out the professional opinions of the teachers within the schools and there were mixed feelings expressed by them. However, they were still in the majority. Fifteen years later and with the advent of noticeable progress in tuition techniques, I have found yet again that the professionals have expressed, with much more of a majority, to support and abolish the 11-plus and to look at a better way of providing tuition to our children.

2000 So how have I gathered this information? Sir, being Chairman of the Dyslexia Day Centre I have  
been in the privileged position of learning at first-hand from our staff who teach in the public and  
primary schools that the vast majority of primary school teachers feel that the present assessment  
at 11 is unfair. In addition, in this academic year the Centre has been working within the secondary  
2005 school system in a pilot scheme with Education to teach dyslexic pupils. This is proving very  
successful.

We have taken the opportunity, in view of this debate, to question secondary school teachers  
within the schools and they also feel that the 11-plus examination should be superseded by  
another form of assessment. I do not confess to be an expert in teaching, if I want to know about  
professional tuition or any other activity, I always speak with those in that profession to gain  
2010 information. This is exactly what I have done to determine my approach to this debate. It is that  
professional advice which has led me again not to support the 11-plus, but to look to another  
form of assessment. It is those professionals who are at the coal face; it is those teachers who  
have daily experience in teaching our children. And knowing this I will be supporting Deputy St  
Pier's A1 amendment.

2015 What I have also gained from those professionals is that we, the States, must make a prompt  
decision on this matter. We cannot allow indecision to have a possible detrimental effect on our  
pupils.

Thank you, sir. *(Applause)*

2020 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Ogier.

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

First, I have to declare an interest. My wife provides some tutoring on certain subjects  
including on occasion 11-plus practice.

2025 When this issue was raised a few short years ago in this political term, at least as a topic we  
may be asked to debate and decide upon, I needed to put aside my own inbuilt bias and  
approach the topic with an open mind. I had that bias as I was selected to have an academic  
education at Elizabeth College at 11, in an exam, which as Deputy Duquemin remembers was not  
taught, nor studied for, which was often a surprise on the day – and I have always felt that the  
2030 system gave opportunities to those who would not normally have them.

But I can see that this is no longer the case. The social mobility aspect has gone, for whatever  
reason, there is no social mobility to any degree whatsoever anymore. The surprise of the exam  
has gone; studying for the exam is widespread; preparation for the exam is widespread;  
nervousness and stress regarding the exam is widespread. These factors and many other factors,  
2035 for me, demonstrate ably that the system is now no longer fit for purpose and has to change. It  
just has to change.

It does not fulfil its aims and its purpose can be circumvented by those with money through  
the medium of tuition. Now, some actually see that circumvention as one of the rewards of hard  
work. They feel they have put in the hard work in life and should be able to use the resources  
2040 resulting from that hard work to provide the best for their children. And I can see that that is a  
valid point of view to have. It is natural to do the best for those you love with the resources at  
your disposal.

However, in that case I would suggest a system where private education is a perfectly  
reasonable outcome to aim for, rather than having a system where using those hard-earned  
2045 resources it is possible to out-compete others who do not have those resources in order to gain a  
free place – paid for by us all – at a school to which children whose parents do not have those  
resources are unlikely to gain a place – even though they partially pay for it. I think that is a very  
unfair outcome. It is an inherent unfairness to many taxpayers who could rightly be shouting – to  
paraphrase an ancient rallying cry – 'No taxation without education'.

2050 I am of the view that the 11-plus has had its day – if it ever had one. It is now right for it to go, for reasons which during this debate have been very well-enunciated. I am not persuaded that there is another system of selection which is appropriate.

2055 However, I do have some reservations about what is being proposed as its replacement, which I will touch on here but go into further detail in general debate. I am keen to understand, as Deputy Brouard is, how we make our secondary schools like a grammar school, instead of turning a grammar school into a secondary school – because there is a perception amongst many in Guernsey that some of the secondary schools are not performing as well as they could be, that there is a great deal of disruptive behaviour and their academic results are not as good.

2060 This report is light on that aspirational development. A teacher from a secondary school wrote to me

‘It is nearly impossible for us to permanently remove a child from our school who has consistently proven over the years to be unrelenting in his or her obstinacy toward learning and is constantly detrimental to the learning of others.’

2065 I asked a member of the Education Department why they do not remove severely disruptive pupils and they informed me it was not their policy to remove them, but on the contrary had an inclusive policy. Personally, that policy does not resonate with me and I think pupils who severely disrupt the learning and social experience of others need to be treated differently. This report is shy on details of how we turn our secondary schools into centres of excellence, but that is not enough for me to be able to defend an 11-plus which is quite plain to all is a failed system.

2070 I am not actually sure in this Assembly that many of us are disagreeing. It seems to me that amongst the majority there is a shared view in this Chamber, by those in favour of removing the 11-plus and by many in favour of its retention that actually the 11-plus does not work as intended. The difference between us, if I can put it this way, is not whether the 11-plus should be retained – but what it should be replaced with. Some are willing to get rid of it now and some cannot see the benefits of the proposed new system in sufficient detail to be able to make that decision that the 11-plus can go. But I believe it is plain to most of us that it does have to go.

2075 So, I will vote for the St Pier A1 amendment as I believe the 11-plus has had its day. However, I will need, during further debates today and tomorrow, to have the questions I have on behaviours and the learning experience in the secondary school, as this is an issue close to many hearts in the community by those on both sides of the debate.

2080 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Le Lièvre.

**Deputy Le Lièvre:** Thank you, sir.

Members of the Assembly, this speech mostly concerns the dangers of coaching. It might not sound like it to start with but that is what it is about.

2085 Yesterday Deputy Perrot’s speech was quite outstanding. In fact I think he undersold himself by saying that he would not change anybody’s mind. If I had been a waverer, as I once was, I would have undoubtedly fallen on the side of retaining the 11-plus.

2090 Deputy Sillars asked Members to avoid referring to their own experiences and I found this very hard; in fact I am going to ignore the advice of my previous Minister – after all I have 13 years of experience as a student, including selection, and only 13 months as a member of the Education Committee. To follow his advice would require me to deny my own experience and frankly, as hard as I might try, I cannot do that.

I honestly do not think that I have analysed my education properly at any time over the last 48 years. Sometimes carrying out a forensic examination of a personal disaster is not helpful. A disaster is a disaster, best left at that. It is life, get over it.

2095 Having taken the 11-plus I was selected in 1960 to attend Elizabeth College – this was a mistake! Let me assure you that somebody or something messed up big time – and I do not think it was me, not at the age of 10½, which was how old I was when I took the 11-plus. I have messed up since, but at the age of 10 and a bit I think I was innocent of such problems. It did not take

2100 long before this mistake evidenced itself. I did not make it out of the first year before I was deselected downwards from 2A to 2B, and this demotion within less than 12 months of first attending the school was to set the trend for the future.

2105 I can look back and smile about it now but I remember, only too vividly, the trauma and possibly shame of being at the bottom of the class – and in particular the evening when I took home my first maths homework. To this day I can remember where I sat in our kitchen and the people who entered and left the room and who witnessed a distraught young lad who already knew he was well out of his depth. I can assure all here today it would have taken a great deal more than a couple of Deputy Perrot's Grammar School friends to remove the scales from my eyes – more like an ophthalmic surgeon!

2110 Why did matters go so wrong for me? Well I will never know for sure, but quite clearly the selection system had failed me – the system had clearly gone on the blink in my case. My belief is that I was coached, not by my hardworking parent who clearly could not have paid for any tutoring, but in fact by the school itself. It seems somewhat statistically unlikely that nine pupils out of the same class in the same school with a large number of social housing children, would be selected to attend Elizabeth College. I remember very clearly during this last year we took a maths exam every Friday morning and I can name the children who sat beside Mr Hill, my teacher at that time, and we formed the percentages as to what we had achieved in that morning. It was tutoring, but in a form that we would not necessarily recognise as such nowadays.

2115 Nowadays it sounds, of course, that the focus of success in selection terms has moved away from the school I attended and is now situated somewhat further south. I ask you, is this just another statistical blip or is it caused by some other influence? Surely the 11-plus is not influenced by geographical location.

2120 My point is this, it was *tutoring* that was my undoing – the reason I spent six years of my life attending an institution, the academic requirements of which were clearly beyond me. It is not a subject I dwell on, as to do so would achieve nothing. It was a subject that had long since been dispelled to the waste bin of life, but the issues surrounding tutoring have risen like some thief in the night and have stolen away my peace of mind such that I felt compelled to share with you my experiences of my early education. And I do not want to see more children selected for an education that is unsuited to their needs by a system that lends itself to abuse.

2125 What about those hardworking parents who simply cannot afford tuition, no matter how hard they might save their leftover cash? What of their children? Are they to be deselected because their dad works in a low paid job or they live in social housing? We know what happens to them, the statistics of seven years do not lie. Let us be honest, we all know that selection does not work; it is not the children that fail, it is the system that fails them. It might not fail for all, but it fails for many and in my book that is enough to get rid of it.

2130 Thank you, sir. (*Applause*)

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Bebb.

**Deputy Bebb:** Thank you, Monsieur Le Bailli.

2140 I find it difficult to know what to contribute to this debate that has not been said, but I think that there are a few points that do bear some examination.

2145 Deputy James made reference to the number of children in relation to mental health issues and a number of other people have made reference to this mental health issue. It was interesting that yesterday I attended the mindfulness lecture, and it was stated clearly that the phenomenon of depression in adults has started at a younger and younger age continuously since, I believe he said, the 30's. It predates all of our internet and the consumerist society that we talk of, and therefore we cannot easily blame anything in particular for the earlier onset of depression.

But, having said that, it was a shocking statistic that 50% of those who will go on to suffer recurring depression will have had their first incident by the age of 15. That is something that

2150 happens and we do realise that children are placed under an increasing amount of pressure and for reasons that we do not understand, that pressure is intense even at the age of 10.

The other point that has been raised in this debate is in relation to PISA. Now I was trying to think where I had read how fairly useless PISA results were, and it was from the well-known Steve Hilton, who was actually a friend to David Cameron and was in Downing Street ... no I think it was 2155 the Nudge Unit, and I think that he started it, and so forth. It was very interesting what he had to say about PISA results. He said this:

"Consider PISA the OECD programme for international student assessment. This has become the totemic indicator for ever education policymaker around the world. Every time the PISA rankings are announced politicians jump over themselves trying to prove some point or other about whether their country has fallen behind, or moved ahead. This is the yardstick everybody uses.

This might make sense if it were an effective yardstick. But it is not. Politicians trumpet PISA scores as if there were a key factor in economic success, yet Germany and the US, two leading global economies have terrible PISA scores. It is assumed by many that PISA rankings are based on rigorous statistical analysis of educational data from around the world. They are not. The scores are based on a one-off test taken by a tiny sample of children in each country.

And the test itself is hopelessly flawed. It is long, two hours, and many students simply do not finish. Not all students are assigned all the same questions, or even all the same sections. So sometimes they are given a reading or maths score without have answered a single reading or maths question.

Considering its international scope the test obviously faces cultural challenges but it totally fails to address them. Questions in different languages create inconsistencies across countries. Some countries, particularly in Asia, teach directly to the PISA test, while other countries treat it simply as something that is done casually once a year alongside whatever they are doing anyway.

Some questions are used in some countries, while the same questions are thrown out in others".

I struggle to imagine why we would want to imagine that as an effective means of measuring education.

2160 When it comes to the question of the 11-plus, I realise that when we last debated it that I used the word that somebody had 'failed' the 11-plus and I faced fairly outrageous sort of stares from Deputy Brouard, in particular, and quite a few mutterings as to how I should not be saying such a thing. I realised that I had touched on a nerve. Having not been educated here in Guernsey, there are certain points that you realise that you are not ever going to be completely local. (*Laughter*) And the 11-plus is a big one.

2165 Having been taught in a comprehensive system I realised that occasionally the language that everybody uses of having failed or succeeded in the 11-plus, those things that Deputy Brehaut described so eloquently, about parents who are overjoyed ... having spoken to friends who have children and they said 'We were delighted when my child *passed* the 11-plus.' Suddenly I realised having said it in debate I used a *faux pas*, apparently we are not supposed to say that children 2170 pass or fail; but such language is exactly the common language and we should not imagine it to be any other way.

Let's not pretend that by getting better scores you will end up going to one of the high schools. It is designed to segregate. As Deputy Duquemin said this morning – I was in the library listening, by the way – it is bizarre to separate at 11 to put together at 16. Now, I have always 2175 favoured some form of selection – historically, I have always said that I have actually found benefits in selection. But selection has to be meaningful, and I struggle to look dispassionately at the system we have in Guernsey and find meaning in it.

I understand that the Grammar School is nowhere near capacity in relation to the free spaces that it has, but it cannot take more pupils in without causing greater detriment to the education of 2180 the high schools. That seems a little bizarre. To sit dispassionately having never gone through this, just looking coldly from the outside, it looks a little strange.

People say that they do not want to lose the great education that is offered by the Grammar School, but the Grammar School only offers great results because 25% of the top have been creamed off into the Grammar. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) And I have to say therefore, when we say 2185 that we want to *keep* the Grammar what we are effectively saying is that we want to keep the 11-plus. The Grammar cannot exist without it. It is absolutely essential, integral, to the whole system.

But I have to ask, if we do lose the Grammar do we not gain excellence across other educational establishments?

2190 Now some people have said, 'I fear what we may get if we would actually lose the 11-plus'. I understand that fear, but I would like to make an equation with health, because so many analogies have been made through this debate with health. I was lobbied heavily before the new Mental Health Law came into passing, stating that the current Mental Health Law dating back to the 1930's was excellent, that the people who actually did the work of sectioning knew the people and that we should not dismiss the great work that the Constables had done for so long. But we  
2195 all know that that Law was outdated and its time had passed. When it came to the decision it was not contentious, because we could all dispassionately agree that the experts thought that actually its time had passed.

In the same way I am struggling to understand why we are so resistant to the same message from the majority of those who understand these subjects, stating that its time has passed. When  
2200 we look as to what system we would have, I would imagine that with 25% of the population and more already achieving excellent results, we would see better leadership across our educational establishments. Therefore, what I see is an opportunity to improve for all.

I do not see the downside on this occasion to agreeing to rid ourselves of a system that was set up in the 40's in a time that has passed, where my parents both taught in sec mod schools. My  
2205 mother was proud of the work that she did in teaching girls the skills of looking after babies and typing. That is what the educational system was designed to do for the sec mod. My father who would be quite happy to tell you that he was an appalling teacher – he chose to change career and become an accountant and he was a great accountant – but even he would say the sec mods had their place.

2210 When of course in Wrexham where they taught, in the North East of Wales, they needed a large work force to enter into manual labour. Not particularly skilled most of it. Of course in South Wales what you had was a need to feed the coal mines; in the North West you had the need to feed the slate mines. And that was the point of the education system, allowing people sufficient language to understand what was actually written to them, numeracy so they could deal with their  
2215 accounts, and then manual labour skills.

That is not what we are looking for here in *this* economy. Someone once said this is a digital greenhouse economy that we have today, so we need a digital greenhouse-style education system. I struggle to see why the 11-plus fits into that. Therefore, Members, I believe that some  
2220 still are, probably, undecided although it is a vanishingly small number by now; but I would say the time has come to say goodbye to a system that has now long seen the end of it.

By the way, in relation to the question of setting up new grammar schools: of course Margaret Thatcher never did – the Law in the UK does not permit any new creation of grammar schools and has not done. And for anybody who questions as to why Margaret Thatcher did not seek to change the policy, just remember that she had 11 years as a Prime Minister where she equally  
2225 chose not to reform the law. Therefore grammar schools even by education standards of the Conservative Party, which some have held in some regard, no longer exist. There are *some* who obviously want it, but the policy is not to revisit it. Even in the UK they have moved far away from this system and it is time for us to maybe catch up – a little late, but never late than never.

Thank you. (*Applause*)

2230

**The Bailiff:** Alderney Representative Jean.

**Alderney Representative Jean:** Thank you, sir.

2235 I want to tell you a little bit about my experiences, but first of all I want to read a little from the brochure that came out at St James Chambers when we went to the presentation on this. And basically 'What is going to happen in Alderney?' is the section entitled:

'It is important that our children and young people in Alderney and our staff at St Anne's School are, as far as possible, able to benefit from our proposals.'

At the moment a small number of students sit the 11 plus tests, transfer to Guernsey and live with host families for the duration of their secondary education. This would no longer be possible under our proposals.

Due to the location and nature of St Anne's School, we consider that it will need an individual approach and therefore possibly different governance arrangements from the secondary federation/single school. We are proposing that St Anne's be an 'associate site' of the Guernsey school and will, as far as is practicable, benefit from the economies of scale and significantly increased levels of expertise encompassed within the single structure.

In practical terms this means that St Anne's staff will be able to benefit from further professional development opportunities with staff in Guernsey, both at primary and secondary level. We will also be exploring the use of technology to enable the maintenance and further development of a broad curriculum offer for 14-16 year-olds in Alderney.

Creative solutions such as shared staffing and technology are being developed to ensure the inclusion of St Anne's students, as far as possible, in opportunities provided for students in Guernsey.'

That is what there is on Alderney.

2240 I want to go a little to my own experiences. I failed the 11-plus, but I have no bitterness about that, none whatsoever. The reason I say that is because during my time at St Anne's School it was the system itself that failed me, I really felt that; and we had a headmaster who caned and disciplined a lot and I was subject to a lot of caning. (*Laughter*) I may even have deserved it!

2245 But the point is, for me to sit in an examination ... and believe you me, I do remember sitting my 11-plus and I do not remember it with happy memories. I sat there and I was given a very sharp pencil and to me, my friends and fellow Deputies, the pen is like a cudgel. I write very heavily, I am not a good scribe. And so the first warning shot was fired by the headmaster and that was 'You be careful not to break your pencils, I have sharpened these'. Well to me, it was no challenge, it was just an accident. I *did* break the pencil! (*Laughter*)

2250 So what I am saying is in an atmosphere of terror (*Laughter*) I took my 11-plus and I failed. Right, that is fine: I failed, I have admitted it, that is a good thing, it is off my chest. But I have no bitterness, I know it was not the 11-plus that did it – it was the atmosphere and it was what was going on.

2255 Now, I am concerned about Alderney and what I read in the brochure, and I stated yesterday in the first part of what I said that I do not feel that Alderney is ready to take this decision yet, and I do not think this has been prepared enough. My own daughter tells me that she liked the Grammar School, she has no qualms about the 11-plus. I am staying with that, I am going to stick up for the Grammar School and I am sticking up for the 11-plus. (**Several Members:** Hear, hear.) And as for where I have been told that people who are more than five years away from the 11-plus cannot speak about it, well there we are for me ... how many years ago? So many years ago you might think I do not remember, but I *do* and I remember it well. And I am going to tell you what I remember, because I care about it. It is not the process, I do not think there is that much wrong with it. You can fine-tune it, you can adjust it – but you have got a very fine Grammar School. Stick to it!

2260 Thank you, sir. (*Interjections*)

2265 **The Bailiff:** The Chief Minister.

**The Chief Minister (Deputy Le Tocq):** Thank you, sir.

2270 Sir, I thank Deputies St Pier and Perrot for bringing this amendment. I thank them because it does enable us to make decisions I think in the right order, and that is very important.

I will not rehearse arguments that have been made by many others very eloquently, and many know that I am on record of saying that I am not in favour of the 11-plus. I am not against selection, and I will come to that in a moment and how that should take place.

2275 But I want to try and address some of the things that perhaps have not been touched on so strongly in debate up to now – two or three issues. They are not exactly elephants in the room, but they are real issues that I think do affect some people in their decision-making. And whilst I understand that we may be entrenched in different ways, there will be people like myself who when I entered into this Assembly in 2000 had very different views and ended up, as I have often

said, by being on Education and particularly by seeing the work of the Borderline Panel – that changed their views, and I think there may be others that still are on that sort of level.

2280 The first point I would like to make is with regard to this apparent fear of the closure of a school – and I think that is aside from selection and everything else. There is a cultural fear and we saw it in the primary debate with the closure of St Andrew's School and St Sampson's School. There is a fear ... because schools are very much at the heart of our communities and are communities in themselves and we grow attached to them, particularly as *alma maters* and when  
2285 we are parents to children at the school, and indeed the school community of teachers as well. So we do not like closing schools and I can understand that and I can sympathise with that, but of course despite that we should always be willing to look at the bigger picture and see what is best for all of us as an Island; and if the long-term improvements can be made by closing some schools and opening other schools, then we need to face that and manage it well. We should bite  
2290 that bullet.

Deputy Perrot, in fact, spoke of the *destruction* of the Grammar School. I understand his emotive language but I want to challenge him on a few points. First of all – and I will come back to this later – the Grammar School has not existed for 120 or years or so, as he said. It was an intermediate school prior to that and in fact it has changed several times over that time. So the  
2295 terminology here is something that I think is important in our mind when we think emotively about the culture of the school, and what might happen if we abolish the 11-plus. In fact the system has really been only in existence – I will give way.

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

2300 The Grammar School, when describing itself in its own history, refers to its being set up in 1883. It may have had a different name then but the institution *itself* regards itself as having been in existence for 133 years.

**The Chief Minister:** I understand that, absolutely, sir, but what I am saying is that we should  
2305 not be taken in by what that means and I want to try and unpack that a little bit – and I will do that in a moment. I think to understand it, that it has been the way it is at the moment as a grammar school with an 11-plus system for that length of time, is totally unhelpful if we are to understand the issues at stake.

So the system really has only been in existence post-war in Guernsey. The largest change that  
2310 might come about – and it only *might* come about – is the removal of the name 'The Grammar School' as such as I see it if we go in this direction – because the building, the teachers and the children would remain at that institution. And my own opinion – and it is my *own* opinion – is that it would still achieve excellent results if on the basis of its intake ... because the children move obviously from year to year, so the community itself and the bulk of the thousand or so pupils  
2315 there change all the time. My feeling and my conclusion having served on Education, is that if instead of on the basis of 11-plus selection that there was a selection on another form – be that feeder schools or geography – that actually it would still achieve excellent results. So what destruction would be going on?

Well it is interesting to note, perhaps, that Elizabeth College –itself, my *alma mater* – certainly  
2320 you might say shows at certain periods in its history had a fair tendency, a fair *attempt*, at self-destruction during its time. In fact it changed hugely during its nearly 453 years – massive changes – and it had ups and downs during that time. Ironically it was referred to historically as 'The Grammar School' in Guernsey for many, many years.

So what we are dealing with here is – and Deputy Perrot alluded to that in his interruption into  
2325 my speech – is the perception of an institution and what that means. And I accept that that is an issue that needs careful handling. But we should not be unwilling to change the system, because systems have changed in that time. Elizabeth College, as I pointed out, has changed hugely during that time. At one point the level of academic instruction and education was so poor at Elizabeth College that it had hardly any pupils whatsoever and the families from Guernsey that would have

2330 been sending their children there were sending them to the UK, because they could gain a better curriculum in the UK than they could in Guernsey – or to France, even.

So the intermediate school, the Grammar School, has changed also dramatically over the years. My mother went there in the 1920's – and if you go there you can see a picture of her on the wall there – but at the time she went, you went at 14; you went much, much later, because the system  
2335 in Guernsey was very different. I do not know if other Members, sir, have read this excellent book, it is called *The States and Secondary Education 1560-1970*. I like the title because it sort of hints that there might be another chapter yet to write post-1970. But in this book it tells a little bit of the history of the secondary education, and particularly the Grammar School, and why it emerged from an intermediate school – two intermediate schools in fact – to the establishment that it is  
2340 today.

You can see how that was introduced particularly because the changes that occurred early on when it was selecting, but it was selecting in a very different way, you had to fee-pay to send your children there there was an element of eventually of the States paying and subsidising some students there. But it certainly did not exist in the form that it exists today. Until perhaps in the UK  
2345 this was something called the Hadow Report and in a chapter in here I want to read, sir, if I may, there is a little section of what was happening in the 1920's.

This was going on in the UK in the 1920's, not in the post-war period where it began to take effect in Guernsey. Guernsey was effectively 20 or 30 years behind the UK before implementing the 11-plus and selective system to Grammar School that the UK had. This is from the chapter that  
2350 deals with that particular era:

'At around the time Guernsey raised its school-leaving age, the British Government had commissioned a major report on the education of the adolescent. This report, better known as the Hadow Report, was published in 1926. Eschewing the concept of one stage education it recommended a division of the educational process into two separate phases with a break at 11. The report further recommends that all elementary schools be reorganised without delay, with over-11's collected into separate senior schools, or into newly-formed senior departments of existing schools. The reorganisation process was officially launched in 1928 and by the 1930s the majority of school children were being separated at 11 in the UK in that Hadow-style way.'

It goes on to say with regard to Guernsey:

'As well as recommending a break at 11 for all pupils the Hadow Report also contained suggestions for the different types of education over 11's might undergo. It envisaged a binary division based on ability in which the reorganised senior schools, to be known as secondary modern schools, would cater for the practically inclined and grammar schools would cater for the academically inclined. Since its establishment in 1902 England's network of LEA grammar schools had become extensive, and since 1907 when such schools were required to offer a quarter of their places each year to elementary pupils selected by examination, the grammar school network had forged important links with the elementary system. This did not occur in Guernsey until the post-war period by which time a new thinking was beginning to emerge in the UK that resulted in the demise of the grammar schools in the 1960's and 1970.'

So the idea that Guernsey has a system and we should not look to the UK. We have always copied the UK, but we have done it about 20 or 30 years behind – that is the fact, that is what has gone on. So the system we have at the moment is really not one thing or the other, and that  
2355 causes problems not only for the continuation and sustainability of that system, but also for us in terms of being able to do the best for all of our children – which is how I think we should look at it.

The grammars schools of course were there originally to – as that particular extract described – to educate the academically-inclined. They were originally for the classics, the three R's; and in its  
2360 history this was deemed to be the course that those who were going to do certain jobs in society would take. It was a social form of dividing children at that early age. Now we all agree, I hope, that we no longer live in that sort of world and therefore that is not appropriate to do.

So if we are talking about selection, what type of selection should we have? To pick up Deputy Soulsby's point – and I think she made a very valid point – the curriculums are now the same in all  
2365 of our secondary schools and the Grammar School, and that is possibly why we see the majority of our children, who have been separated at 11, coming back and doing tertiary education and

2370 further education and higher education, later on. That never used to happen. It did not happen very much in my day, when Deputy Trott and I were at Elizabeth College, he did not even continue to sixth form. I went to sixth form but it was a very much smaller sixth form (*Interjection*) in those days – and look how well he has done on it, as well.

2375 But things have changed today and we have greater expectations for our children. So I would put the question the other way to Deputy Soulsby, sir, I would say why do we bother separating them at 11 when in fact they are doing the same system, they are doing the same curriculum, they have got the same opportunities and we have the same expectations of them in terms of life later on? In fact it would be unfair if we said to children at the Grammar School now, 'You cannot do vocational subjects because, actually, you are an academic school.' You would find very few wanting to go to the Grammar School on that basis, because today children want to take a breadth of subject choices, whether that is at 14 for GCSE, or post-16 at A Level. That is the world we live in today.

2380 So I have said, sir, that I am still in favour of selection, but what sort of selection am I talking about? Well some have talked about potentially continuous selection as another form. If we are going to get rid of the 11-plus today – and I do hope we will – but if we are going to do so, continuous selection of some sort might take place. (*Interjection*) Continuous assessment, yes.

2385 I think one of the ways in which that could happen ... perhaps it did happen, certainly when I was at school in the late 70's, and 80's and there were a number of my friends who ended up not passing the 11-plus and going to the Grammar School or to the colleges, who at 13 or 14 sat another exam and ended up being able to have a second bite of the cherry, as it were. So there was a sort of another opportunity to do so and some have suggested that should be in place again. Well that may well be the case, but actually in the end that is going to be very difficult to manage – and how could you do that with the breadth of curriculum that we are dealing with today? It was a very much smaller curriculum in those days.

2395 So what I envisage, sir, is having schools where that continuous assessment, that continuous means of making sure that children are educated in classes where the brightest and the most able in that subject area are stretched – and I do not believe our current system does that in any school – but the brightest are stretched. And those at the other end of the spectrum who require the most help – and perhaps have different learning abilities with different ways and methodologies of learning – can have appropriate help for that and are able to get that help in that particular set. That needs to be done on a subject basis and therefore there needs to be enough in a school to do that. And what I am talking about of course is setting within schools.

2400 Why is this unpopular? Because this would mean all-ability schools.

2405 Would they work in Guernsey? Well we already have all-ability schools in Guernsey – it is called the primary schools system. We are about to introduce it for pre-school as well. So our children will be in that environment for the majority of their early years up until age 10 or 11 – and it works well, does it not? I believe that it could work for 11 to 15 year olds as well, because we do it again post-16. So it is only a small period. Why do we not do it for that small period?

Well I would like to make a suggestion, sir. I think one of the reasons that we are a bit reluctant to change the system and a bit reluctant to have all-ability schools from 11 to 15, is because there is an inbuilt fear about our child – my child, or my grandchild – having to associate with those children who might be disruptive.

2410 I went to a school where there were quite a lot of disruptive children – yes, Elizabeth College. And I remember some of them and a few of them are here today. (*Laughter and interjections*) And yes, I was scared of them at that time at certain points (*Laughter*) and I was glad we had a setting system. But of course I was an only child, and a little but over-mothered perhaps, and so I needed certain environments where I rubbed shoulders with them, and for me it was on the sports field, which I was never any good at! (*Interjections and laughter*) But nevertheless it did teach me a few things, because I learnt to do that, it is not a bad environment. I notice the Deputy Greffier looking at me at the moment because he felt exactly the same as me I think.

2420 But nevertheless, in all-ability schools what can happen is ... because children change and develop and for all sorts of reasons, it is not just to do with parenting although I accept that sometimes that is the fear behind it – it is the lack of support, perhaps, that you might get. But whether it is in maths, or music or on the football team, being able to rub shoulders with people who come from a different background from you is actually very healthy and good for society.

2425 And I would suggest that is one of the reasons why there is an inherent tendency to think we need to continue selection to different schools. I do not believe we need to do that, what we need is to have proper setting within schools and have enough of an intake in schools and have schools of a certain size where that can be done in an effective and positive way for the benefit of all whether they are brilliant at maths, or brilliant at music, or brilliant on a football pitch, or brilliant at art, or history, or whatever it might be – because we are living in a different age and our young people want to make those choices.

2430 Finally, sir, just one point with regards to – and it has already been mentioned by Deputy Parkinson – but I know for certain that recruiting teachers to secondary moderns is very difficult, particularly 11 to 15 secondary moderns. It is becoming increasingly difficult because you do not need to look to the UK where there is only 5% of children in grammar schools, that the vast majority are in comprehensive education.

2435 If we are recruiting from elsewhere ... and I have sat on a number of panels, as other Members have here when they were on Education as well, where we have had teachers from international schools and the English-speaking world elsewhere – none of which select on that basis – who do not want to come. When they realise that they will be coming to a school where they have not got all abilities available it does put people off. If we want to recruit the best teachers – I am amazed we manage to do it, and we do manage to do it but it is becoming increasingly difficult – we have to wake up and realise that the rest of the world, and it is not just the UK, does not do this any longer.

2440 So, sir, those are the three things I would like to bring to people's attention. I encourage people to support the amendment, but to reject selection at 11. (*Interjections*)

2445 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Dorey.

**Deputy Dorey:** Thank you, Mr Bailiff.

2450 Deputy Perrot said yesterday that everybody had decided. Well I have carefully listened to the speeches, his speech and all the speeches today, and I am wavering – I think I will come down on one side, which I will conclude on – but I have certainly been listening to debate and been influenced. A few years ago I was strongly in favour of the 11-plus, but I have listened to the points about the effects of children not going to their preferred school, re-joining together at 16 and coaching, and that has made me rethink.

2455 Last year when I spoke in the debate, I concluded the best system was for two 11 to 18 schools and end 11-plus. The Chief Minister has just spoken about recruiting teachers and all the information that I have been given is that the challenge of teaching up to A Level is what would enable you to recruit the best teachers. Also by having larger schools you have the career opportunities which will also help us to attract the best teachers. Everything I have heard is that is the key to improving your education system.

2460 So when these proposals came forward I could not support any 11-plus, if we were going to keep four schools, for the reasons I have just outlined. Initially I compromised, having three 11 to 16 schools and one with a sixth form, and I would support ending the 11-plus. But then I have re-read the Billet, I have re-read many of the emails we have received, and I must say that of any subject I think the number of emails we have received and the quality of the emails, has been truly impressive and the effort people have made to set out their arguments.

2465 Deputy Parkinson this morning said about no knockout punch and that is my problem, there is no knockout punch to justify change. Surely there should be that knockout punch if we are going to make a change. Many speakers have referred to the advice of teachers and I find it difficult, if

2470 the teaching profession was so much in favour of it and it was such a burning issue, why so few took part in the consultation.

If you look at the consultation, if Members want to turn to page 1621 where it has got the teachers' reaction to their results from the consultation - page 1621. The question is how should we decide which children go to which secondary schools in the future? When you look at those results: by attainment i.e. how well they have performed at primary school, or by potential academic ability e.g. 11-plus, those are two blocks that are the largest blocks. By catchment area is smaller and by feeder primary school is smaller. So that indicates to me that actually the teachers thought that a system based on either attainment or potential attainment was the best system. So I am struggling to see how some have concluded that the teaching profession wanted the change.

2480 One teacher, who I think wrote to most States' Members spoke, and he is a senior teacher, I think he summed it up when he said,

'I do understand and sympathise with many of the arguments against selection. Having said that there is also a very compelling argument for the retention of selection, and overall the evidence is inconclusive either way.'

So okay, if the evidence is inconclusive, why should we change?

That is backed up by the excellent report from UCL in the Billet; and on page 1686 it says in their conclusion:

'This illustrates the point that, overall there is little difference in performance between selective and non-selective systems on average, but that there is greater variation in performance in selective systems.'

2485 So they concluded that there is little difference in performance.

Turning over the page from there they talk about, on page 1688, a study by Guyon in relation to Northern Ireland, they have got grammar schools and they had falling rolls, so they increased the proportion of pupils attending grammar schools overall by 15%:

'Before and after comparisons and comparison between areas were made when the affected pupils reached GCSE and then A level. Overall performance rose, and was sustained, at about 10% higher than previously.'

It goes on to say that:

'Top ability pupils did not suffer and pupils who would not previously have been admitted did better by being at grammar schools.'

2490 So there is evidence actually that grammar schools improved the performance of those pupils by increasing the roll of the grammar school.

Then I look at on the webpage for the Education Department about Your Schools. They had the Island Global Research Benchmarking Assessment Report. In there they look at other Islands and interestingly they look at education expenditure per capita – the Isle of Man is slightly less than Guernsey, Jersey is more and Gibraltar is quite a lot more. They look at the various education systems and basically they all have non-selective systems apart from Guernsey – although Jersey has a number of private schools. But the results were interesting, because in terms of five A to C, including maths and English, Guernsey came out at 67.2%, with Jersey 58.7%, Isle of Man 50.8% and Gibraltar 55%. Guernsey was very clearly a lot higher than those other Islands which are considered comparable to us.

2500 Going back to the UCL report, there has been a lot of criticism about the 11-plus test and is it a good quality test? They talk on page 1680 about Cognitive Abilities Tests, which is exactly what the 11-plus is. They said they looked at a nationally representative cohort of 80,000 pupils in England, and compared both Key Stage 2 and CAT, Cognitive Abilities Test, results at the age of 11 in 1997 and GCSE at 16 in 2002. And it says that the Cognitive Abilities Tests reasoning scores at 11 were the best single predictor of all GCSE outcomes. That was a study of over 80,000 pupils. So it is essentially saying that the 11-plus test was the best single predictor of all outcomes.

2510 The criticism, as I mentioned earlier, has always been about coaching – and I know Deputy Le  
Lièvre specifically talked about what happened in his case. It always seems to me that for other  
external exams, schools coach pupils to get through those exams; surely if we had a system where  
all system where all pupils were coached for the 11-plus – and I can only go back to what  
happened with my children, I have tried make it personal – there was hardly any coaching within  
the primary sector. But if all children had coaching, yes you could buy an additional one, but if all  
2515 children had a certain level of coaching, as they do for other external exams, perhaps you would  
then remove the effect of coaching. Yes, additional coaching can add a little but more, but if  
everybody had a basic level of coaching, I think you would have less of the effect of coaching,.

But it is interesting at one of the presentations, what one of the ex-head boys of one of the  
schools said about the 11-plus system. He was saying that when he was at primary school he was  
always behind other pupils who had greater ability than him, but having gone to what is now a  
2520 high school he said he had a chance to shine and he came out near the top – and he became a  
head boy. He said he would never have had that at a school where you had the full-ability range.

Deputy Hadley spoke about change, and that the Grammar School would stay the same. Well I  
asked the Education Department for a list of the GCSEs done at each of the high schools and also  
at the Grammar School. There is no doubt that the Grammar School will have to change, the  
2525 Grammar School's curriculum is different – it does not have the vocational subjects which the  
other high schools have. And the other high schools have less of the academic subjects. For  
example, you can do Spanish at the Grammar School, but you cannot do Spanish at any of the  
High Schools – I think one of them does German and the others do not do German. So there is a  
difference but there is a core of subjects which you can do at the Grammar School and the high  
2530 schools and presumably that is what enables people to get the results which enable them then to  
go on to do A Levels.

Deputy Parkinson, also this morning, spoke about the high schools need to improve. I agree  
with him. But I think that we need to see that improvement first before we make the change. I  
think to say ... and he said 60% of all children were achieving five A-Cs including maths and  
2535 English, but I think we need to see that first. Others I think, including Deputy Ogier, have  
mentioned about disruptive pupils and I know, I have spoken to head teachers and disruptive  
pupils are a problem and I think we need to solve those problems first and not just increase the  
ability range of those schools without solving those problems.

That brings me on to my other concern, which is about ability range in a class. I have tried not  
2540 to mention my family up to now, but from my own family's experience, the children's experience, I  
think ability range is important and everything I have heard from teachers is that the smaller the  
ability the range the better in a class, and the better they are able to teach that group of children.  
What we are going to do, unless we radically increase the size of our schools, is to have a greater  
ability range in the class. Now that is fine we can cope with that, but I do not think that will be  
2545 beneficial to our children, because we are not willing to make the change to having the larger  
schools.

So I conclude by saying I do not think there is no conclusive evidence either way, but there is  
some indication and I particularly use that benchmarking report, using the results from Northern  
Ireland in relation to increasing the number of people that go to grammar schools, that actually  
2550 grammar schools do work; and there is also some indication that Guernsey has better results than  
our similar Islands which do not have a selective system. The consultation concluded, absolutely  
clear, there is no public demand for change.

In light of that I have to come down and conclude that we should keep the existing system.

Thank you. (*Interjections*)

2555

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Collins.

**Deputy Collins:** Thank you, Mr Bailiff.

I shall be straight to the point, in a moment. *(Laughter and applause)*

2560 As previously stated in Education debates, I have a niece at the Grammar and I have a niece at St Sampson's High, plus many other family members at other schools, coming from a very large Guernsey family. I will not talk about my own personal Guernsey education as we could here all day, or express or repeat the views by many Members.

So, where am I, sir? A1, yes.

2565 Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Gollop

**Deputy Gollop:** Yes, sir.

2570 Very possibly I was one of the disruptive pupils that Deputy Le Tocq was referring to earlier. *(Laughter)* If you want some personal anecdotes, I did not directly take the 11-plus, like Deputy Trott, although I was on the Island, because I was entirely within the private sector at Beechwood and earlier Melrose, and I suppose it takes all sorts to make a States-run Island.

2575 Although I would say that, in a way, we did take the 11-plus, because I do remember a mysterious gentleman coming into the school with a selection of intelligence tests, you could say, which were maths, English and further maths, and diagonal things. In those days I gather they were used as a kind of intelligence test because the flavour of the era – and I am not sure if it is still true today – was Professor Eysenck's IQ, intelligence quotient, test. But I remember later a head teacher told my mother that I seemed to be a person whose IQ was dropping each year, so I  
2580 seemed to *(Interjection)* break the system.

Indeed it is interesting, if you want anecdotes, that in the first two or three years I was with the scholarship pupils in set one for maths and below in English, and by the final year of GCSE O Levels I moved up to the set one in English but down to set four in maths. So, I was almost sharing Deputy Le Lièvre's point of view. So we do vary for whatever reason.

2585 Also, I did fall behind with Latin and German and I ended up not doing those examinations at all and I think it was suggested I could have a private tutor, but at the time it was deemed to be rather unethical, so I am somewhat intrigued to hear how the coaching sector in Guernsey has obviously taken off in recent years.

We have heard a certain amount of history, about the 1944 Act and so on, and of course Sir  
2590 Winston Churchill was mentioned, and as was known from the *Churchill's Secret* television documentary, a Mr Rab Butler – and he later became an Oxbridge Warden funnily enough – did stand in as Prime Minister. Now of course the Government we were talking about when the Education Act went through, was a coalition wartime Government, but for a while there appeared to be consensus between Labour and Conservative parties on this – but as has already been  
2595 mentioned by Deputy Perrot, it was in the Wilsonian era of Anthony Crosland that there was a change made, which the Conservatives tended to follow, perhaps reluctantly. It is interesting today that Deputy Fallaize was quite right, the Conservative Party maintained, generally speaking, opposition to creating new grammar schools – but UKIP does not. You could argue – a cynic might argue – that in the Tony Blair era there were a lot of attempts to create grammar schools  
2600 that were not grammar schools, whether you call them academies or specialist schools by any other name.

I find this debate extremely difficult because as we have heard from the results from the research survey, there is inconsistency amongst the public who are questioned. Because the majority position appears to be *against* the 11-plus and selection of that kind, but *for* the  
2605 Grammar School – that might reflect the nature of the questions, the process and the different elements of knowledge of the people concerned. I also accept that although the head teachers on the Island are generally united in their support for the Education Department's views, there would be differences of opinion amongst teachers past and present.

2610 I actually am entirely supportive of the vision of the Education Department more or less from  
the start, and I think we have seen in this Board the most united and perhaps intellectually  
powerful, board the Education Department has had for many a year, and they have impressed us  
with their diligence and dedication. The Department is full of very able civil servants and head  
teachers, but at times the Department has seen that its parts are stronger than the whole, and I  
2615 have not always had as much confidence as I should have had in the Education Department as a  
body, not at policy, but at implementation.

I mean, even some people who are their supporters have mentioned a few concerns today  
even. We heard from Deputy Brehaut a moving piece about whether their policies on catchment  
areas were too rigid. We heard from Deputy Fallaize and others, Deputy Green, that maybe the  
consultation process was wrongly-titled and gave a misleading impression. I could give numerous  
2620 examples where strange judgements have been made about scholars, about catholic schools and  
all kinds of issues.

Just to look at the report – which I think is actually a pretty good report, but requires a lot of  
detailed reading. They mention an extraordinary anomaly, and that is that the colleges, if they  
have one of the 23 places filled, if for whatever reason that place becomes vacant during the five  
2625 or seven years of the student’s likely tenure at the college, the Education Department continue to  
pay for the place; that is bizarre. We have also heard, very recently, that there are vacant spare  
places at the Grammar School and that perhaps the reason why they are not filled is either a rigid  
adherence to cohort views or a reluctance to reduce the ability ranges at the other secondary  
schools.

2630 Now, clearly what we have seen in the last 15 to 20 years is an 11-plus system that has not  
really worked at the level of the way it has been organised – which is a pity, because I actually  
think the system we have could have worked a lot better if it had been implemented in a more  
rational even-handed way, I am tempted to say, where some of these difficult anomalies have  
been ironed out. Where there *had* been opportunities for pupils to transfer, not just at the ages of  
2635 11 but at 12, 13, 14, 15, where there was flexibility to attend different subjects in different schools.  
Where places were filled, whereby people who perhaps had just narrowly missed out on the  
borderline, or for some personal reason at the age of 11, had been given the opportunity to move  
when a place became available, as is of course the case when people to the Island.

I think if we had really been dedicated to making the system work post-2001, we would not  
2640 necessarily be in this place today. That saddens me because I think that we are venturing into the  
unknown and we run the risk of losing as much as we gain. We do not really know how many  
pupils will be in each school; we do not really know how far the curriculum will vary; we do not  
quite know which pupils will transfer from one campus to another. There is also, if one  
superficially takes Education’s proposals at face value, the possibility that there will be four near-  
2645 identical schools in difference parts of the Island, one of which will still have a sixth form attached  
– that happens to be the current Grammar School.

If, as is stated in the report, one of the reasons for the reluctance to move down to three sites  
is the desire to keep four sites in operation with their staff complete, then that would indicate that  
one of the schools would continue to be a kind of grammar school, because it would not only  
2650 retain the Grammar School teachers but would also retain the ex-Grammar School sixth form. I am  
not sure that the consequences of that have been fully thought through either.

That is why I am reluctant to vote for the change at this point, because I think strangely  
enough the decision to go for a change would be better if we had perhaps three schools rather  
than four schools, because there would be more ... but perhaps that perhaps is a subject of  
2655 another debate. (*Interjection*) Yes, but it actually strengthens the case funnily enough to drop the  
11-plus.

The other issue that I find hard, is some people have seen this as a debate about selection or  
not selection. (*Laughter*) I do not see it that ways at all. (*Laughter*) No, I never will. Now the reason  
I do not is firstly, we will not just see the end of the Grammar School as we know it, we will  
2660 fundamentally change the colleges. My colleague, Deputy Parkinson, earlier spoke about the

necessity, apparently, of some form of entrance examination based on ability. That could be retained and it might be taken by many pupils across the Island if they wish to avail themselves of that as yet unknown scheme – which of course might be privately provided by the college due to benefaction.

2665 But, it is equally possible that the colleges might choose to offer we'll say, a bursary place based on sporting excellence, or artistic, or music excellence – or intriguingly enough, exclusively for pupils who come from social housing. That would not necessarily be an ability test. But we are not, as I understand it, abandoning selection with the Education proposals, because if even you leave the college points to one side, we are seeing a kind of 14-plus whereby students for the sake of argument who discover within themselves a scientific bent, or a technological bent or  
2670 whatever, might transfer to another school where there appears to be greater resources or specialisation or curriculum development in that field. So there would be a form of selection.

And I will go back to my college days. We were all happy boys together – well, some of the time we were happy – but we were in four forms with a least three, if not four, sets for many  
2675 subjects. And there was also a stream of pupils who were considered perhaps not as academically gifted as others and they were, to use a phrase from Deputy Duquemin, slightly segregated in that era – and we are going back many years, it is not relevant to talk about it now.

But the point I am making is you will see people taken away from their friends in a way, to be setted, and you may not be seen to pass or fail but it will still be depressing for some pupils to  
2680 find themselves in a large school and their fellows going off to set one or set two and themselves going in to set four or set five. So there will be selection not only at 14, but there will be selection for sets and/or streams if streams are a feature in any schools. But there will certainly be significant selection for sets, and the idea that you will have no selection at all is a myth.

That is why I would prefer to look for a tweaking of the current system and I will explain what  
2685 that might be in maybe a subsequent debate.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Langlois.

**Deputy Langlois:** Thank you very much, sir.

2690 In many ways this has been a very refreshing day. We have an Assembly who from time to time have debated many much more minor issues than we have today. We had the concern that this was going to come up in the March debate and how would that go, how would that play out. I would say that whatever the differences, I hope everybody would agree with me that this has been a very, very good debate, a very good quality of debate, it has covered all the ground. And I  
2695 would like to add our thanks to Deputies St Pier and Perrot for getting this first bit of the debate in the right order – because this is what it was all about, it was always going to be that way and we started where we should have started.

Can we just be absolutely clear about one thing and then my comments will be reasonably  
2700 brief. It is possible that this afternoon the Grammar School, as we know it, will cease to exist or will be predicted to not exist anymore. We cannot beat about the bush as to what that decision is, and some will choose to grasp it, others will not, but let's not try and cloud the issue about whether that is what the decision means.

Now, sir, debate in here serves two democratic purposes. First of all it instructs and informs the electorate about how decisions have been reached, the sequence – it must be pretty hard to track  
2705 that decision making process as a listener on occasions. It also allows Members to sway others' views through persuasion. In any debate one of these two always prevails and I think this has been very much about the information, getting the information out as to this is what we are talking about, this is what we are deciding and so on. I doubt, with others, that there are many floating votes up for grabs, certainly at this late stage, and therefore in my mind there is no  
2710 relevance about how I am going to vote at this. No purpose in me repeating any of the arguments. They have largely been heard.

I was particularly ... actually a fact I did not know, or a quote I did not know, I cannot remember who made it, but of course I agree with Sir Winston Churchill about the importance of having the team wearing many different types of tie. I think is very important in all aspects of life. 2715 So why don't I just ask us to proceed to a vote and sit down? (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) (**Several Members:** Pour.)

Well, sir, there is just one indisputable fact about the two amendments which we are currently talking about and I want to sound this word of caution. If we vote for the retention of selection, the excellence of the Grammar School is maintained and the method of selection at 11 will still be 2720 a topic for future debate, undoubtedly. I would predict that a new Education Committee, even if it has not been instructed by this Assembly, which of course could happen, will feel compelled after such a decision to revisit the method of selection and place more emphasis on continuous assessment, and various other approaches.

If we vote for abolition of selection then we are setting ourselves on a path which is a huge 2725 challenge of transition, and that is transition during a difficult financial era and it may be even more difficult that the next Assembly will face. That carries significant risks and I go back to – and risk has been mentioned by several speakers – to my cautious concern, that the risk may be too great. The risk attached to closing a school which has been very successful – some would argue the most successful State-run school in the Island for many years – is too much for me.

I would need a much more compelling case to make that major and radical change and I do 2730 not think the case that has been presented is compelling enough.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Kuttelwascher.

2735 **Deputy Kuttelwascher:** Thank you, sir.

Sir, when you have a complicated issue like this, because it is definitely complicated when you look at the size of the Billet. Something I always do is go back to basics, so I asked myself what on earth is the 11-plus. I looked it up on the internet and there is actually a suite of a number of 2740 possible papers for the 11-plus – I think it is seven. They include numerical reasoning, reasoning, maths, English, verbal reasoning, non-verbal reasoning and vocabulary.

I then asked, well what do we do in Guernsey? Well we do two of them, verbal reasoning and non-verbal reasoning. Now I then asked, why? And I asked a member of the Education Department and he said well that is what basically at some time in the past, they were advised to do. I then asked, well what is wrong with it? I was then told by another member of the Education 2745 Department, it does not deliver in the sense that you cannot measure potential which it is meant to do. I said so why are you doing it? That drew a blank.

I then thought right, back to my kids – I am not talking about myself – they never took the 11-plus, because we happened to be living in Mauritius at the time. I fished out what their equivalent is, it is called the Ministry of Education Certificate of Primary Education. I looked at the subjects: 2750 English, maths, French and geography. English and maths were a necessity, the French was a requirement because in Mauritius French is their first or second language depending who you are, then there was a choice in the last subject. I noticed that maths and English are on the 11-plus possible syllabus. Why aren't we doing that?

I still really have not had an answer to that. You get some answers that you say the maths and 2755 English are assessed as you go along through primary school and it is done in a different way. So at the end of the day, I thought well there is a lot of flexibility in the 11-plus on what you can actually assess – and I do not like using the word 'select', I hate it, it could be semantics but when you select it intimates there is an elitism or even a snobbery about it, because when you are select you think you are something special, 'I have been selected for this'. If you say I have had an education assessment and I have been assessed at the present time to be more vocationally 2760 gifted, as opposed to academically or technically, I do not see that as a big issue.

This business of pass and fail is something that has been brought up several times when people say that is how it is perceived. Well why is that? It is a sort of snobbery – it does not come from within, it does not come from a lot of the kids.

2765 A couple of weeks ago two children were interviewed on *Channel TV* and it really impressed me, one of them was a young lady already out to work and she said, 'I didn't succeed at the 11-plus but I did not consider myself a failure' – as happy as anything, contributing to society. They then asked another young man who happened to be a plumber and he said, 'I didn't succeed at the 11-plus, but I do not consider myself a failure I am doing what I want to do'.

2770 My children did not take the 11-plus and when we went back to England it made absolutely no difference to their educational progress, because what they did in Mauritius was sufficient to see them on their way.

2775 Snobbery, what is snobbery? I once heard an interesting story where two guys were talking and one said to the other, 'You are snob.' He said, 'Why do you say that?' And he said, 'You've got an inferiority complex.' He said, 'What do you mean?' And he says, 'You think everybody round you is inferior.'

2780 And that is what it is all about, isn't it? How do we change that culture in society? I would say with big difficulty. We have got a Guernsey initiative now when we are trying to change the culture of our Civil Service to look at things in a different way. Wouldn't it be nice if we had this Nirvana where people would just be a little more fair and respectful of each other? But I do not think that is ever going to happen. You can maybe improve it, but get away with this word selection.

2785 Now one the obvious things that has come out today is that people are not too happy with the 11-plus as it is. Deputy Gollop says it can be tweaked. Of course you can tweak it. You could change its name. Why not? Are we not a separate jurisdiction? Why not call it 'Assessment of Educational Direction'? The word 11-plus in itself is toxic – get rid of it! You could do that tomorrow. At the next board meeting the Education Department say, 'We are going to rename it. Let's not make it a pass/fail, call it an assessment.'

Why not?

2790 Yes, I give way to Deputy Trott.

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

Sir, I am very grateful to my friend Deputy Kuttelwascher for giving way.

2795 I would like to ask him whether or not he is aware that, irrespective of the outcome on St Pier amendments A1 and A2, it is my intention to lay an amendment which will say something along the lines of: (*Interjections*) 'Selective admission of students shall be retained, but on the basis of a combination of progress tests and continuous assessment, conducted during the final two years of a pupil's primary school education.'

And it does seem to me, sir –

2800

**The Bailiff:** Is that a proper interjection, Deputy Trott? An interjection can –

**Deputy Trott:** He gave way, sir!

2805 **The Bailiff:** He gave way, but he can only give way for an interjection relevant to the point being made and that is in order to sort of advance the current debate.

It seems to me you are trying to cause the debate to deviate onto some amendment that might be laid in future.

2810 **Deputy Trott:** I am shocked at your view, sir, but I shall sit down! (*Laughter*)  
Thank you.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Kuttelwascher.

2815 **Deputy Kuttelwascher:** Yes, I was aware of this amendment, in fact I read it and I corrected a typo. *(Laughter)*

But anyhow where I am standing now is the issue of, we are looking to possibly finish with a particular system now but we do not have really in place something that is suitable. That is why such an amendment ... in fact Deputy St Pier was suggesting he may lay a similar sort of amendment, because there seems to be a general wish to have some sort of, shall we say, more relevant, fairer, system of assessment and I think that is where most of us stand.

2820 So, as I look at these two amendments before us, there are only two options and I very much agree with what was said by Deputy Langlois. I will not support amendment 1A – or is it A1? A1. I will support amendment A2. But further amendments will come.

2825 Now having said that the other thing I have to say is, whatever decision we make today will not be the end of the matter – because nothing can actually be delivered before the end of this term. I know this will be an Election issue, it has already been said it is going to be an Election issue by people I know. They said they will look to see how we behave on this issue and they will bring back an Assembly which will either support the end of the 11-plus or not support it. So whatever we say today is not the end of the matter.

2830 So you almost feel, well, what's the point? *(Interjection)* But nonetheless, the point for me is this. I will not support the amendment A1 and will support amendment A2.

Thank you, sir.

2835 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Inglis.

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

Education brought me to this Island, because I met a girl who wanted to come back to Guernsey. I thought I was marrying nobility because she had a hyphenated surname. I then found out what Le Page is in Guernsey. *(Laughter)*

2840 But the key point of her impressing me to come to this rather small bit of rock was to say that the education system is good. And we were just starting our family then and I thought well that is going to be good. We were living in a big city in the UK and the pupil ratio to teachers was very high and it made a lot of sense. But of course my opinion ... oh and I forget to tell you she is a teacher, so I got indoctrinated for a very long time as to the – what's the right word – unbalanced approach to education here and not everyone is getting the best deal.

2845 It did create reservations, sir, that I thought well, what is going on with education in Guernsey? Why do we have the 11-plus? I sent an email to Deputy Sillars who very kindly came back on the basis that I wanted to know what the 11-plus really is at the moment. And do you know, it is still two tests within one week, exactly the same as I did 50 years ago? That is terrible. That really does show that we are behind on how we should be assessing people in this day and age.

2850 I was even more amazed that there are no forms of continual assessment. The views of the teacher of the child are not taken into consideration. So therefore it is down to a test on the day, assuming that everything goes according to plan.

2855 I have heard the word 'failure' and I feel that this is not the correct word. It was falling at the first hurdle – and we all fall at hurdles as we go along in life. Some of us do not pass our driving test straight away, some of us do not get the GCSE that we are looking for straight away. But there is still an opportunity to keep trying – and certainly Deputy Paint stressed this. That is an important feature in the society we live in today.

2860 There are many issues associated with the 11-plus which perception makes it bad for people. If we call a school a 'secondary modern', that implies you are going to the second best school when you took the 11-plus. Now what is good is the 'high school' name is a lot better in ensuring that people do feel valued and what they are doing is valuable to their future outcome.

I think – and this will come up in later debate – that Education has let us down in terms of there is no other plan to this. We have either got this or we have not got it. But listening to

2865 Deputy Trott's belief on an amendment coming through, then maybe that will deal with the problem.

My circumstances with my three children gave me a great insight into does the system work. I had one go to the Grammar School, one go to a college and another one went to St Sampson's. Now, they went to the right schools. So as Deputy David Jones mentioned, one size does not fit  
2870 all. It is important that assessment, however it is done, ensures that the person goes to the right school that they can cope with. We do have lots of ways of revisiting the problem area by nature of the exam system and the ability to transfer.

I went to one of the presentations, sir, on the post-16 opportunities. I was absolutely  
2875 flabbergasted at what young people are offered on the simple basis that they have fallen at that hurdle. That really was reassuring, that that opportunity it still there continually going along.

But there is one thing I would like to bring people back down to earth with, and it has been mentioned a couple of times, especially by Deputy Bebb. We have to acknowledge that the society we live in has chiefs and Indians, and educationalists in the middle. It is so important that a lot of people are happy to be Indians and if they want to ascribe to be a chief, there is plenty of  
2880 guidance to do that. So the Indians are very important in our community, although Deputy Bebb did talk about the digital greenhouse that is going to carry us through. Well I am afraid it is not, the digital greenhouse is not going to fix your plumbing or deal with your electric system. There are huge areas for people who want to use their hands in vocational opportunities.

So I am concerned that Education are trying to push people into areas that are not necessarily  
2885 for them, educationally they want to move into area that suit them as they come through the system. We do live in a different world, technology is playing a strong part and I have not heard it mentioned. People can achieve educational results just by doing off-Island courses through the internet, so there are lots of opportunities to improve yourself.

But could I give you another basic understanding of what Education is letting us down on? I  
2890 have been employing people for a long time and you will be amazed how many struggle with writing and reading and they will not always tell me. But if I employ someone to go and do a job who then comes back and tells me what he has done, I then pass on an invoice to the client to pay us, for me to then pay his wages. It is as simple as that and it is all down to the ability to put together constructive sentences. I think English and maths is letting our business community  
2895 down big time in Guernsey and I really want to see that improved and have the reassurance that Education are working on that.

There is one other thing, sir, that does need stressing. I was talking to a primary school head on Monday where she, rightly, felt that parental support is one of the biggest keys to helping  
2900 certainly with English and maths. And they are going about bringing parents into school and understanding the role they need to play in bringing on people to achieve and aspire and get benefit out of the education system.

So, taking it right back to where I started, I was indoctrinated to understand that our education system is not fair, but I see the methods that we are looking to distribute people through the education system as being the right way.

2905 So, sir, I cannot support scrapping of the 11-plus as it stands and I look to see guidance from Education that maybe they will address this matter.

Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Quin.

2910 **Deputy Quin:** Thank you, sir.

Well this is the third time that the likes of Deputy Jones and myself, and one or two others, have been through this. The arguments are exactly the same, the only thing that has changed is the faces of the people who are making them. No difference, no difference at all.

2915 Of all the speeches I have heard, the one that made me think about it was Deputy Langlois just now. The risk we are taking of making this move into the dark. I do not think it is a risk worth taking.

I would like to thank Deputy St Pier for putting these two papers together, for and against. This is quite simple. You want it or you do not. That could have been done four hours ago, we could have got on with other things.

Thank you, I will be supporting the retention of the 11-plus.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy De Lisle.

2925 **Deputy De Lisle:** Thank you, sir.

I think Members have to think very carefully on this one because what is being suggested, really, with regard to the selective system at the current time, will have a devastating effect on the colleges and on the Grammar School. While the facilities at the Grammar School will stay, we are not going to close the school they tell us. But the fact is that the education within it will be a comprehensive type of education. In other words, everybody will go to that school from the Town schools, apparently. I can see a rush of sales in the country, people moving into the Town, unless we are going to move the teachers out of those schools and distribute them around – that is another issue. Otherwise we are going to see certainly some redistribution of the population in order to captivate and capture the location to that particular facility and that educational opportunity.

2930 But, sir, I would like to just state that certainly in my career I have found it very rewarding teaching in selective schools, and I have taught in the Grammar, the collegiates in Canada – that is the same as the grammar schools – also the technical schools in Canada and the commercial schools in Canada. And for the Chief Minister to say that in fact selective schools do not exist anymore, that is not correct, because they are in other systems and in the Canadian system certainly. Also of course in secondary modern high schools in Hertfordshire and also in Guernsey here.

2940 With respect to the comprehensives that I have also taught for five years in London, they were certainly more challenging than the selective schools and more stressful, actually, with the high range of abilities in those schools, because whilst setting existed – and it was A, B, C, D, E, F, G – it was a challenge going from one set to another in those schools. I worried about the children in the lower sets and realised that those children would actually be in the top sets in other selective schools. And that is the difference. And that is the point I was trying to get at with Deputy Duquemin's points, when I spoke about this some time ago. I was concerned then about integrating people back into the Grammar School mainstream basically I was talking about, not the education mainstream.

2945 But make no mistake about it, the comprehensives in the UK and the one that I was teaching in was doing a very, very good job; we had students every year going to Oxford and Cambridge. We had students moving to the top football clubs in England, (*Interjections*) yes, Tottenham and others. But my fears were for those of lesser ability that perhaps were not being pushed as much as they might be in the secondary high schools.

2950 And that is a point that I think is worth really bringing out here, because we have got a lot of success here in Guernsey and I think we have to actually push our successes and not be afraid to talk about them. It comes at a time of high praise in the school report for La Mare School and commendable efforts made by the pupils, teachers and parents at that school. We were told that students are eager to learn, teachers are of a high standard and the senior leadership team determined to drive it forward. That is at La Mare.

2960 But it is not only La Mare that has risen to credible ratings. The fact is that the high schools are competing against the best in the comprehensive system in the UK. I think we have to draw a lot of comfort in the educational system in place here, when we realise that they are doing that and achieving results that are comparable.

2970 So the high schools are succeeding and the Grammar School and the colleges are providing commendable results, and we have a system in Guernsey that fits the Island well and provides choice in a very small place. I think we are lucky to have the diversity that we do have here in such a small Island. We should welcome that.

2975 As a few others have mentioned, we speak up the success of the good education system when introducing newcomers and businesses thinking of locating here in Guernsey. But this is not England, the Guernsey system is quite special, it has developed over time and those of us that have been brought up here and seen life outside, understand that. I look to continued evolution in education here, rather than total upheaval and revolution, along the lines being proposed by the present board. And a future of stability.

2980 Stability is key to investment and opportunity in these Islands. I believe that there are lessons to be learned here for a Treasury, struggling and failing to balance the budget, with a deficit now up £3 million to £23 million. Any instability affects investment in these Islands and I think we have got to be very careful with the educational system here in the future, because we are talking about 2019 – all those years will be years of instability.

2985 There are also lessons for our emphasis at commerce I believe, in diversifying our economy and ploughing £7 million into the Economic Development Fund to attract new industry and the high net worth entrepreneurial class to the Island. Now, a stable and successful educational system is key to success there and the type of instability, and uncertainty – I think this is the big thing, the uncertainty as we go along in the next few years – is that is upheaval in education will not provide that stability, particularly as many investors and potential residents and homeowners will see the reforms in a negative light.

2990 Sir, sometimes, particularly when operating in a fairly fragile economy it is best to leave well alone, particularly when the current educational system is successful, as I have said, and is proving itself as it is, and is responsive to change as it is and we are commended outside by the system and its success – then we need to stay with the system that will promote these Islands. I believe that we have to think very carefully before subjecting the Island to the type of change which is coming from the mouths of people who are saying that they are new boys on the block, that is what Deputy Condor said, *(Interjection)* Conder, said, yes.

2995 Deputy Green was apologising for the slogan 'Your Schools, Your Choice' that they had brought out. So there is a lot of rethinking to be done there and I do not think that this is the time to show that Guernsey has this uncertainty in the education system which we have used in the past as a plus to relocating to Guernsey, new businesses and entrepreneurs.

3000 Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Deputy Lowe.

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

3005 Well two days later, sir, and we are still on education and we are not a lot further ahead than what we were yesterday. All because of these two little bits of paper and booklets here, for your verbal and your non-verbal 11-plus.

3010 What are we doing now? We are designing a system in the floor of the Assembly, **(A Member:** Hear, hear.) with different people coming up with different ideas, how we should do it and there you go, whatever what we are going to. And if was even suggested, well what are we going to do, and it will be an Election issue, said that yesterday; and heigh-ho, perhaps we should have followed the sursis, but there we go. *(Interjections)* Exactly, exactly. So it is too late, but we are where are we are as they say and we are no further ahead now than we were yesterday morning. *(Interjections)*

3015 Some Members have actually said a couple of things which I want to pick up on, and some of it is on the coaching because I have spoken to different ones at different schools in the primary schools, and I have asked what factual numbers have they got about coaching increasing. And all

of them that I have asked have said, 'We have no evidence, whatsoever. We have not got hard and fast numbers.'

3020 All they can say is that they *believe* it is on the increase, but there are many parents who will not accept that they are actually having their children coached, because they do not want the others to know that that is actually what is happening. It is also a fact that many of these teachers in the primary school that want to get rid of the 11-plus, are those that are doing the coaching privately, which is a little bit odd really. But that is their choice.

3025 I also asked the question about what about those that are now opting out of the 11-plus. They have seen an increase in that, there are more parents who are saying that they are not going to put their child through that, they did not see any need for it, especially now these days when they know exactly what day it is that they will be taking the 11-plus, whereas years ago you just turned up and you found, like you said before, the desks were in a different position, so you knew this was going to be the day for the 11-plus.

3030 So there are parents who are opting out of that for their children, saying there is no point in them going through it all, because it is not on maths, it is not on English, it is on these pretty colours and looks a bit like my grandson's colouring book, let's colour in all the different shapes, really. There is not a lot in there that actually does tell you the real performance of a youngster and how they are getting on in their education.

3035 So it is has also been said by Education, and indeed by some of the others, they keep referring to the last two years about the great influx of more girls than boys at the Grammar School, and that is right to promote that. But please quote the two years before that, because the two years prior to that there were actually more boys each year. So if we are going to look at data, let's not be too selective, because in the years 2012 and 2013 there were more boys than girls that entered the Grammar School at Year 6, unlike years 2014 and 2015. So I think it sort of pans itself out really at the end of the day.

3040 My father's advice was always: get on with your life, never mind about what other people do, never mind which other schools they go to, you are all different and that is the only reason to not let anything bother you. At that end of today we are all different and nobody is better than you, they are just different. I think that is exactly the message, those wise words that he gave me and I have passed on to our family – never have a complex, you are all different. Do what you want to do in life and if you really want to succeed, you will succeed.

3045 Thank you, sir.

3050 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Harwood.

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

3055 At this stage in the debate it is very difficult to introduce anything that is going to be meaningful or that will in any way sway any people who are still floundering on the fence. All I can say, sir, is the views I will make on the two amendments. The basic test for me, because I accept that the educational arguments are evenly divided – we have had emails from educationalists arguing one way, we have had emails from educationalist arguing the other way. We have heard from the head teachers of the primary schools and the secondary schools arguing very strongly against retaining the 11-plus. We have had arguments and we have seen research that suggests that perhaps the 11-plus is not so bad.

3060 Sir, the basis on which I make my assessment on the outcome of the two amendments – and I thank Deputy St Pier and Deputy Perrot for identifying the key issue that we need to debate, and we have debated it and it has been a very good debate. But the basis on which I will come down to support the Deputy St Pier A1 is basically – which is a fundamental pretext of my life – what is the fairest. It is fair to put children through the rigours of the testing that surrounds the 11-plus? Is it fair at the age of 10 – because in fact most of them will be 10 when they do the test – to make an assessment? Is it fair on the parents who are unable to provide the coaching that I have heard that people will need in order to get through those tests? No, it is not fair.

3070 The fairest basis on which we should proceed within Education is to accept the principle of the A1, get rid of the 11-plus, and surely it is fair then to have a continual assessment as they go through the secondary schools, up to the age of 14 or 15, when they can take an informed choice, as to which subjects best suit those children for purposes of going through GCSE. That, I believe, is a test of fairness. If you apply the test of fairness then you have to accept the A1 amendment,

3075 and that is the way I will be voting.

Thank you, sir.

**The Bailiff:** Is there anyone else?

Deputy Sherbourne.

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

**The Bailiff:** I thought you were going to sum up for the Department.

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**Deputy Sherbourne:** Yes, I believe that is my task.

**The Bailiff:** Well, I do not know if there are any other speakers who might want to go before we go into the closing stages. There are a few people who have not spoken. Does anybody else wish to speak? No. In that case Deputy Sherbourne and then it will be Deputy St Pier to reply.

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

Members, Deputy Fallaize in a very good speech, 100 years ago – it seems like that – said he had been waiting 25 years to make that speech. I have been waiting 47, and I know that there will be Members of this Assembly who will say, 'Well, keep waiting!' It might take another 47 years.

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I will sum up on behalf of Education and respond to one or two of the questions that are in the air. But I do take note of the comment that Deputy Harwood has just made with regard to repeating the arguments that have already been made.

Having said that, I think it will be quite useful for us to just think back to the start of this debate and some of the issues and some of the comments that have been made, that do deserve a response.

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In particular, I would like to respond to Deputy Perrot's comments from yesterday because he provided me with an agenda, which probably would take 47 years to actually respond to. But he made quite a few claims which I would like to correct. The first being a challenge on the integrity of the Education board and the suggestion that the board was being dominated by 1960's ideology and dogma. Nothing could be further from the truth. Other than, if that ideology means equality of opportunity, equity and excellence I subscribe to that. I would accept that and say well yes that does figure.

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It figures because it is spelled out in our 2013 Vision Statement which you endorsed with one amendment. There are no surprises in Education's proposals. None at all. There is innovation, there is consensus, changes – some of which I have not been particularly happy with – but we have followed the direction of this Assembly. We have given due diligence to the task that we were given by yourselves. I found it quite hard to have to sit here yesterday and listen to the sort of challenges about the integrity of this board.

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I am a proud member of the board for four years. We have managed to stay together, to come to unanimous decisions on the policies that have been brought to you. It is not for me to bang the drum of Education and to list the achievements over the last four years, but believe me they are substantial. But the most important one is the fact that we address the issue of standards in our school, right from the word go. Not just our secondary schools, but our primary schools.

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We have got a well-developed Standard Effectiveness Team now that has been working very, very hard over the last four years in providing the sort of data that teachers need to provide the sort of individual intervention that our children deserve. Most of you were at school a long, long

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time ago. A lot of you have actually made the effort, I am sure, to get into schools and see how they actually work today. But you are not professionals, you are not the people that are doing the work at the sharp end, day in day out, witnessing the trauma, the baggage that people bring into our institutions day in and day out – managing this sort of process which is an inconvenience for most teachers. They see no need for it.

We now have in place a tracking system which is appropriate through to the end of Key Stage 2. That is being extended now to Key Stage 3 – years seven, eight and nine. We know at any one time where children are in their development and their progress. Progress data is available and our teachers actually work to that. They are aware of it. They know where little Johnny, or Jane, needs an intervention at any time. It is not just an amorphous class of 30 or, in my days actually, nearly 50 youngsters in a primary class that had to be taught in great big chunks, having information chucked at them, having certain skills that they had to regurgitate and practise.

Modern technology actually has changed the whole scene. We heard from Deputy – sorry, I have forgotten her name – (*Interjection*) Deputy James. I heard from her today that all she sees with young people nowadays their heads down into phones. Yes it is true. I actually see quite a lot of adults doing that as well. (**Several Members:** Hear, hear.) But I tell you what though, what that technology has done is to make even more rubbish of the 11-plus system, because the 11-plus system used to be based very much on a knowledge-based test. A very subjective one in the past.

Think back to your own experiences. You may well have done an English test, marked by a good teacher, no doubt. Marking English papers, unless you are going to focus on spelling – and I know a lot of you would love to do that – but would lose the whole sense of creative writing and the sort of wonderful writing that our children achieve these days. Those in favour, please say aye; against, no. The ayes have it. The ayes have it. That was the way, but they were assessed objectively – sorry, *subjectively*, I must get that right! It was a subjective decision. Maths of course is much more a reasonable measurement of where a child is at any one time.

I had certainly no pleasure, but I did have the experience of borderline panels when I was a head teacher. Now I would not recommend those to anybody and yet if we were to take the results of our consultation, we would give the responsibility of determining which school our children go to, to the teachers. I hated it. I was given maybe a dozen youngsters that fell in the borderline, and I hated every minute of it because I knew that whatever decision we were actually going to make would have a great impact on those children. Those that believed they were successes and those that believed they had failed.

It was actually an extensive process. It was well-structured, but it was one terrible responsibility. I had a responsibility, I was a head teacher of a 500-plus school. I accepted those responsibilities because whatever we did in that school, day in, day out, that I had some control over, impacted on the lives of all those children; and actually all those children were the focus of our work. So, yes, I feel passionately about it, you have heard me speak passionately about things before, but education *is* my passion. That is why it is great privilege to stand here and actually argue Education's case for change.

Let me just talk for a few minutes, about things that have actually been said before but they need to be reiterated. This system was created, was formed on the basis of what has been suggested is fraudulent research. It was suggested that you could measure potential in a child by giving them an IQ test – and that, Deputy Lowe, is basically what they are doing now. They are the two papers, they are recognised as being probably the most accurate assessment – but not really of potential. They are a snapshot of what a child can achieve at the moment.

So the person that designed this system, Cyril Burt, his work was discredited in the 50's. And here we are 2016 and we are still organising a structure and a system based on discredited work. (**A Member:** Hear, hear.) We still do it because it suits those that control our society, actually, to keep the *status quo*. I listened with interest to the debate today and sometimes it sounded like it was an old boys' club talking to one another. It was the old boys' network. Now I do not think, to be fair to my colleagues here, that when it comes to the crunch that they really, hand on heart, will be able to deny a much fairer, equitable system for the children of this Island.

3175 We also heard last night criticism – well not criticism, an actual acceptance – that there are some good ‘comps’ in the UK. There are some. There are some *superb* comprehensive schools in the UK.

**Deputy David Jones:** We are not the UK!

3180 **Deputy Sherbourne:** Thank you, Deputy Jones, that it is up to your ... (*Laughter and interjections*) No, I am determined to keep calm. (*Laughter*) There is a passion, but it can be controlled. (*Laughter and interjections*) Yes, there are some good comps.

3185 We judge our performance at the moment in Guernsey on national statistics, national averages, and we actually applaud ourselves when we just beat the UK national average. What a nonsense, that is not our benchmark. It is not even our benchmark to measure ourselves against local education authorities, where there could be hundreds of schools involved. That is not right for this little community. This community is minute, it is a small town – well, not a small town, but a reasonable sized town in the UK.

3190 So our benchmark, as far as I am concerned, should be an equivalent town in the UK that has the same sort of demographic. If you can find one on the coast, even better. The one that I actually focus on and refer people to, because there is plenty of evidence out there for you to see, is Winchester, in Hampshire. It has a slightly larger population than Guernsey, it is 116,000. It has an 11 to 16 comprehensive system with a sixth form college. That sixth form college is one of the best-performing sixth form colleges in Britain. It has high schools that outperform our average by  
3195 an incredible amount. Their performance is tremendous and they are comprehensive schools. Yet we hear this rhetoric about how poor English schools are. ‘We must be better than them’. Of course we are not, and we have still got some way to go.

3200 Deputy De Lisle mentioned his experience in London. He will also probably know – he tells us that he went and taught in a very successful comprehensive – of the London Challenge, which many of you are aware of, which was established in 2003 by Estelle Morris. It was a challenge to London comprehensive schools that were failing badly to get their act together. What we saw was a community approach towards the development of schools. The local council, the local third sector, the school itself and the governing bodies – because of course those schools had governing bodies – working together. They are now outperforming just about every school in the  
3205 UK. That is the result of a focus on moving schools forward.

Yes, comments have been made about the secret being leadership and excellence of teaching, of course it is. That goes without saying as far as I am concerned. And believe me, every single teacher in this Island wants that. They want excellence for their children. They want to perform at their best. It means that we might have to invest even more on the professional development of  
3210 our teachers. We have not got a great record on that, I am afraid, and that is as a member of the board, and we are trying to do something about that. We want to make that the focus.

We have already seen progress in our primary schools. The outstanding teacher initiatives which we have been working through are really, really successful. The problem is they are expensive and so there is a limit to the number of people who have been able to access them.  
3215 They are now being extended to our high schools and believe me, the challenge that was set by my St Peter Port North colleague, Deputy Parkinson, when he said he would like to see the high schools achieving 60% GCSE. That is not beyond the realms of possibility. I would say that was a fair target. Our schools now are doing extremely well.

3220 Let me remind you where we were five years ago. Where, through no fault of their own, two of our high schools – because this States had decided to close one of the high schools – had the devastating experience of accommodating all the youngsters from that school. Two schools, not three. Two schools had all those children, not dumped on them, that is not fair, but the actual process devastated the equilibrium and the chemistry that existed in those schools. And surprise, surprise, two or three years down the line their results are bad. Those two schools – St Sampson’s

3225 and La Mare de Carteret – have now had excellent validation reports. You know the sort of quality youngsters that are so proud to actually be there.

I heard my colleague, Deputy Inglis, talking about the interview with young people that were not hurt by the 11-plus. He was not listening to the two interviews that I heard with Jenny Kendall-Tobias, the two young people from La Mare de Carteret – their Youth Speaks team.  
3230 Actually there were three of them, the two boys, and the girl from St Sampson's High. They had been damaged, they had been hurt by the process. So please do not try and pull the wool over people's eyes, as Deputy Perrot was trying to do yesterday. It hurts. It hurts families and it hurts our society.

Failure. It is a horrible word and there are very few teachers – there are none that I have known in secondary education that would use that about their children. The people in their care, they work incredibly hard for. You have a committed profession in this Island, celebrate it. We do not need the comments, 'We need to lift the standard ...' – I mean it was said only a few minutes ago. It was an *insulting* comment alluding to the fact that our high school teachers are not quite up to the standard of the Grammar School staff. What an absolute nonsense and disgrace! (**Sever**  
3240 **Members:** Hear, hear.)

We want to retain some form of selection, is suggested. You people ... honestly, if you had been into schools talking to teachers and talking to managers, you would know that happens now. It is not ignored, we have selection in the form of setting and in fact I do need to differentiate between streaming and setting, because those two terms are used very often quite  
3245 erroneously. (*Interjection*) They are *not* the same. The 11-plus is streaming and it is saying, 'You have reached a standard in these two tests' – which are very unsound by the way, they have got about a 30% error factor. But you take very little notice of that – if you have passed, that is fine; if you have not, you go to the high school.

Sorry, I have lost my ... (*Interjections*) Ah, yes, the difference between streaming and setting. So  
3250 11-plus is streaming. Or the other description would be that when you get a cohort of youngsters in the school you get them in convenient chunks, maybe 20 or 30 youngsters, and they then stay together depending on their ability for the whole of their time within the school. There should be movement, but we know from the sort of reasons that have been expressed already, that that does not happen. It is called 'self-fulfilling prophecies' and the evidence that we have had since  
3255 the 1950's – Canadian actually, Deputy De Lisle – Canadian evidence that proved that if you expect a child to perform to a certain level, they will do it.

If the teacher is told you have got a – let's say B stream there – those children, surprise, surprise, will perform to a B-stream level. If they are the A stream they will perform at that level. If  
3260 they are considered to be the least able in the school, they will never get off base line because of the self-fulfilling prophecy. The evidence has been there, we have ignored it. I have not ignored it but I have been part of a system that has ignored it. Much, I think, to the shame of this society.

I have mentioned tracking, it is well established in our schools, we now know where children are, we can help them individually. Our overall proposals actually lead us down the route of tracking to the age of 14, with the 14-plus cut-off, as it were, because that is the time where our  
3265 youngsters choose which of the GCSE pathways they go on and then they make their choices. And they actually work extremely hard for their GCSE results. Depending on the results, they either access our sixth form centre, or our College of FE. It is not to do with the 11-plus, but it is to do with our overall proposal.

We want children to have full access to all aspects of education. At the moment the Grammar  
3270 School do not access the Link courses at the College of FE. Why not? I know some plumbers, electricians, really skilful people that went to the Grammar School. Now, that will probably happen in the future but the system does not facilitate it now. There are so many anomalies in how we structure our educational system that we want to address the lot – and that probably is one of the big problems in our report, we are trying perhaps to address too much.

3275 But we want to lay the foundations for future improvements. That is what we are doing with our proposals. They are not radical, they are not radical at all. Just about everything we have got

in there is in place now. Yes, we need to improve upon it. Yes, we need to refine the federation approach.

3280 **The Bailiff:** You are going well into general debate, Deputy Sherbourne. I have given you a lot of latitude but if you are not careful I many not allow you to speak later in general debate. I would ask you to focus on the amendments.

**Deputy Sherbourne:** Okay, sir, thank you very much.

3285 Right, well I think in that case, I will refer to one or two of the comments and do a traditional summing up. I should have said at the start, that this one big responsibility for me. It is the first summing up and the last summing up as a here today, gone tomorrow Deputy. We share the same experience.

3290 Deputy Gillson, it was a very fair question that you actually asked with regard to the curriculum. I can tell you that up to Key Stage 3 they are the same curriculum, with the exception of the three sciences and, depending on the strengths of the teaching staff, the language provision as well. At Key Stage 4 the high schools provide as broad a curriculum as they can for the size of the school, and I know that might seem a bit of a weak answer but that is what they do. Remember that the Grammar School as it exists at the moment – and yes, it is a good school but  
3295 every child in that school benefits from the fact that it has got a sixth form attached to it. Its staffing allocation, its funding, its resources is probably more equitable now than it was years ago when I first came over here. But it means that they have an inbuilt advantage. I will save my comments about this to a further debate, otherwise I think that the Bailiff will tick me off again.  
*(Interjections)*

3300 Right ... setting arrangements, Deputy Soulsby. What I would say about Deputy Soulsby's speech is that, as always, it is extremely well put together, and I know she was speaking about her own experience. I believe that she comes from the Torbay area and the school that she was referring to as an academy was a grammar school. In fact I would use Torbay as a benchmark, it was one of my proposals to the Education Department, because it is a seaside community, it has  
3305 got a selective system and we could actually measure our performance by it. If you would like to look online and look at the difference in the performances, surprise, surprise you will find the same as you have here. In other words the old Grammar School is performing extremely well and the high school is struggling. There is nothing new in that.

3310 Deputy Bebb mentioned PISA and I would just briefly dwell on PISA. It is a snapshot test at 15 years of age and he actually outlined some of the problems associated with it. What many of you probably do not know is that the country that has actually been just at the top of the PISA ratings for many, many years, has now basically dispensed with them as a measurement. That is Finland. Finland now is moving away from our individual structure of subject teaching to a different approach; but actually Finland is a really good example of egalitarian approach towards  
3315 education. It values its teachers for a start. It is time that we valued our teachers more. But PISA in itself has had its day. If you want to look at real important research for Guernsey, look at OECD reports on social mobility. Those are the things and that is the area that our system fails our community in – big time.

3320 Alderney Representative Jean mentioned the ... I mean he is very consistent, he is a good friend of mine, he has been very, very consistent with his position over selection for as long as I have known him. But I would say to him that he is missing the opportunities that the Education proposals actually offer because, yes, you would lose the odd one or two children coming over here, but you would gain a lot more at 14-plus with the federation approach. But that is just a response to your comments. I would just refer you to the head teacher of the school for his  
3325 opinion on that. I am sure you would find that helpful.

I think I have probably said enough to be honest. I have spoken for a long time. I have got a lot more that I would like to say.

3330 I have spoken about Burt, I did not actually compare him with the modern thinking of Carol Dweck – fixed mindset things cannot change, to growth mindset which through effort you can develop. Our schools have embraced that and are doing brilliantly, and in fact I read on a tweet or something the other day that Elizabeth College has embraced the growth mindset approach and that is great.

3335 Right, we have got unanimous support from our professionals, every single head supports what we would like to do. I do not think it is for this Assembly to ignore that. I do not think it is for this Assembly to move ahead with any changes in mechanism without talking to them about that. It is all very well on-the-hoof amendments. I know they are coming. That worries me greatly because I have seen the way that this Assembly works with regard to amendments. Not only does it destroy integrated policy, but it messes around with little steps along the way, because it does not suit a certain number of individuals. I know the bottom line is we vote on it, but that is how it works.

3340 So I ask you to support us in taking this important step forward, which will be good for every child in the Island and will ensure a good future for this Island, maximising the talents of its people, because they are our only resource.

3345 Thank you. (*Applause*)

**The Bailiff:** Deputy St Pier.

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

3350 I think it has been a very good debate and certainly been good-natured. I think it had the potential to be quite an ill-tempered debate and I think it is all the better that it actually has not been. I even enjoyed the analogy of the ... was it the fox and the scorpion? (*Laughter*) So I thank Deputy Sillars for that.

3355 I would like to begin I think by apologising to you, sir, for saying that I would circulate a potential consequential amendment without your consent. I wish to emphasise though, that if A1 is passed then it would be my intention to lay an amendment which – again, if passed – would ensure that sufficient resources are available to manage the transition; and also to ensure that setting by ability must be, as Deputy Green said, a feature of the secondary system.

3360 I think Deputy Harwood referred to that in his comments as well. And I am very grateful to both Deputies Stewart and Soulsby who have indicated to me that they would be willing to second such an amendment.

3365 As Deputy Perrot said ... was it yesterday? I suspect very few people will have actually been persuaded on this matter in debate, despite the many hours that we have been here. So I think there is actually very little merit in me reprising the debate and the issues on both sides of the 11-plus issue. (*Interjections*) We have had plenty of time for that. But there is one further point which has not yet been made, which I want to make now in closing. And I will be brief.

3370 We are about to turn, I guess tomorrow now, sir, to the three school/four sites debate, and laying the amendments in the way that we have is intended to keep the arguments and the debate separate. However, whilst Treasury have said all along that our school estate requirements should follow the decision on selection, it is worth making this point. The financial case – the financial case for three schools is 11-plus neutral. In other words whether the 11-plus stays or goes the financial savings would still be made with three schools. But the educational arguments – the educational arguments for three schools, are far stronger without it. They are far stronger without it. So for those, sir, such as Deputy Stewart and Deputy Adam, possibly also Deputies Gillson and Dorey, who I believe are firmly committed to a three school model on financial grounds alone – and there may well be others in the Assembly, sir – I would strongly, strongly urge you to support amendment A1. You can rest assured that selection by academic ability can continue by means of setting.

3375 Sir, Members who are in that position need to know that when they vote on A1, if it loses and the Assembly backs A2 quite a few supporters of a three-school solution will be unable to support

3380 that outcome if 11-plus is retained. In other words, irrespective of the educational arguments retention of the 11-plus potentially has a very high multi-million pound price tag in terms of both capital and ongoing revenue expenditure. So for those who are looking for a knockout argument I offer them that as being the knockout argument to help them settle their minds on which way to vote.

3385 On the other hand, for those who have concluded that the days of the 11-plus are over, but want to retain four schools – and of course the Minister for Education, Deputy Sillars, for example, is one of those – that option remains available under amendment B1, which of course we will at some point this week get to. *(Laughter)*

3390 So, sir, in my view Members should, for sound educational and financial reasons, support amendment A1. And we will need a recorded vote, sir.

**The Bailiff:** And I take it you wish the votes to be on A1 first, and then A2? So Members you are voting on amendment A1, and for the benefit of anyone who may be listening, A1 reads:

'To delete Propositions 1a and 1b and substitute:

"1. To agree that the current selective admission of students to States' secondary schools and the grant-aided Colleges based predominantly on the 11 Plus examination shall be replaced with effect from September 2019 (for new Year 7 students) by non-selective admission to States' secondary schools based predominantly on a feeder system from primary schools."

And a recorded vote will be held.

*There was a recorded vote.*

3395 **The Bailiff:** Deputy Le Pelley.

**Deputy Le Pelley:** Sir, I do not know if this is the appropriate time, but there is just one little point of correction I should like to make and I did not want to disturb anybody's voting pattern in all of that.

3400

**The Bailiff:** Well, we have still got another amendment to vote on.

**Deputy Le Pelley:** I appreciate that. I will make it now anyway. It is just that Deputy ... okay –

3405 **The Bailiff:** Well, debate has finished, so I am not sure whether it is relevant. *(Interjections)* I think if you wanted to raise a point of correction to what someone was saying you should have done it while they were speaking. I think one needs to be careful about any danger of re-opening debate at this stage.

*Amendment A1*

*Carried – Pour 26, Contre 20, Ne vote pas 1, Absent 0*

<b>POUR</b>	<b>CONTRE</b>	<b>NE VOTE PAS</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>
Deputy Harwood	Deputy Kuttelwascher	Deputy Le Pelley	None
Deputy Brehaut	Deputy Domaille		
Deputy Robert Jones	Deputy Langlois		
Deputy Le Clerc	Deputy Gollop		
Deputy Sherbourne	Deputy Trott		
Deputy Conder	Deputy David Jones		
Deputy Parkinson	Deputy Lowe		
Deputy Bebb	Deputy Spruce		
Deputy Lester Queripel	Deputy Dorey		
Deputy St Pier	Deputy Paint		
Deputy Stewart	Deputy James		
Deputy Gillson	Deputy Perrot		

Deputy Ogier	Deputy Brouard
Deputy Fallaize	Deputy De Lisle
Deputy Laurie Queripel	Deputy Inglis
Deputy Le Lièvre	Deputy Soulsby
Deputy Collins	Deputy Luxon
Deputy Duquemin	Deputy Quin
Deputy Green	Alderney Rep. Jean
Deputy Le Tocq	Alderney Rep. McKinley
Deputy Adam	
Deputy Wilkie	
Deputy Burford	
Deputy Sillars	
Deputy O'Hara	
Deputy Hadley	

3410 **The Bailiff:** The voting on amendment A1 proposed by Deputy St Pier, seconded by Deputy Perrot, was 26 in favour, 20 against, with one abstention. I declare it carried. *(Applause)*  
Now you vote on amendment A2, which is:

'To delete Propositions 1a and 1b and substitute:

"1. To agree that the current selective admission of students to States' secondary schools and the grant-aided Colleges based predominantly on the 11-plus examination shall be retained."

Is there a request for a recorded vote or not? *(Interjections)* Yes, there is a request for a recorded vote.

3415 **Deputy Bebb:** Sir, could I just seek clarification before we vote? Could I seek clarification that of course if this is carried then what the effect would be and whether the previous amendment should annul this?

I am a little confused as to where we are procedurally and I wonder if you could provide clarity?

3420 **The Bailiff:** Mr Procureur? *(Laughter)*

3425 **The Procureur:** This is always the difficulty when what you have placed before the States of Deliberation ideally should be an either/or choice, but because of our Rules of Procedure you can only have a *Pour/Contre*. So if this were carried, despite the last one being carried, it would hold the day. The most recently-approved amendment would be the decision of the States.

3430 **The Bailiff:** Yes, but of course it begins with the words 'To delete Propositions 1a and 1b'. They have already gone, effectively we have got to read that as to delete Proposition 1 and substitute ... in other words this would replace the Proposition that has just been put in place.

**The Procureur:** That is strictly speaking correct, sir, yes.

3435 **The Bailiff:** So, if this is carried it replaces the previous Proposition, and this 'carries' wins the day.

*There was a recorded vote.*

*Not carried: – Pour 19, Contre 27, Ne vote pas 1, Absent 0*

<b>POUR</b>	<b>CONTRE</b>	<b>NE VOTE PAS</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>
Deputy Kuttelwascher	Deputy Harwood	Deputy Le Pelley	None
Deputy Domaille	Deputy Brehaut		
Deputy Langlois	Deputy Robert Jones		
Deputy Gollop	Deputy Le Clerc		

Deputy Trott	Deputy Sherbourne
Deputy David Jones	Deputy Conder
Deputy Lowe	Deputy Parkinson
Deputy Spruce	Deputy Bebb
Deputy Dorey	Deputy Lester Queripel
Deputy Paint	Deputy St Pier
Deputy James	Deputy Stewart
Deputy Perrot	Deputy Gillson
Deputy Brouard	Deputy Ogier
Deputy De Lisle	Deputy Fallaize
Deputy Inglis	Deputy Laurie Queripel
Deputy Soulsby	Deputy Le Lièvre
Deputy Quin	Deputy Collins
Alderney Rep. Jean	Deputy Duquemin
Alderney Rep. McKinley	Deputy Green
	Deputy Le Tocq
	Deputy Adam
	Deputy Wilkie
	Deputy Burford
	Deputy Sillars
	Deputy Luxon
	Deputy O'Hara
	Deputy Hadley

**The Bailiff:** Well, Members, the result of the voting on amendment A2 proposed by Deputy St Pier, seconded by Deputy Perrot, was 19 in favour, 27 against, and 1 abstention. I declare that amendment lost.

3440 We need to rise now and – *(Interjection)* Sorry, no, it is lost. Yes, that is right. *(Laughter)*  
Sorry, I thought you were challenging how I had declared it.

**Deputy David Jones:** Sir, I was just questioning how the vote was different from the previous call – *(Interjections and laughter)*

3445

**The Bailiff:** We will resume tomorrow morning at 9.30 a.m.

Can I ask those who are laying further amendments to let the Education Minister see them as soon as possible, so that we are not taken by surprise tomorrow morning? If they have got them ready now let him have them now.

*The Assembly adjourned at 5.36 p.m.*