

Winton's duplicitous school excuse doesn't pass pub test

1 By the Education Department's own reckoning, Esperance Senior High School has the most building defects out of all 834 WA public schools — 121 of them. It's a catalogue of disaster and despair. The incredibly resilient students and staff do their best, but they've endured for years now. Why should people in the regions be treated like second-class citizens? The Government can get on with a racetrack but not vital school enhancements?

2 I had hoped to visit the school to better understand the community's ongoing grievance. Upper House colleague Steve Martin and I wrote to Education Minister

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Sabine Winton, as is protocol, to request permission but were denied. The minister offered up some excuse about not wishing to disrupt day one of the new school year, even though her own social media feed and that of the Premier showed both of them visiting schools — on day one of the new school year!

3 No one forget the name Austin Appelbee. He has to be recognised in the next round of bravery awards and he's my early nomination for Young Australian of 2026.

4 Police have now charged the man who allegedly threw a bomb into a crowd at Forrest Place with engaging in an act of terror. Good.

The sort of extremist ideology the police allege was behind this monstrous act has no place in Western Australia.

5 The first 17 words of the story on page four of Thursday's West should weigh extremely heavily on the Cook Labor Government; "Desperate first-homebuyers have all but given up on being able to afford a home in WA." What do young West Aussies have if they don't have hope?

6 Inflation up, interest rates up. It's a sorry story. The pressure is on Jim

Chalmers to cut spending but don't for a second let Roger Cook and Rita Saffioti off the hook. They are up to their eyeballs in the government overspend.

7 There should be a coronial inquest into the suspected double-murder suicide in Mosman Park. It's the right thing to do for Leon and Otis and it's the right thing to do for the grieving community.

8 In response to the growing concern about school crossing safety in the electorate of Churchlands (and beyond) I've launched an initiative called CrossSafe. It's designed to bring together school leaders, parents, traffic wardens and other local

representatives to combat the escalating incidence of near-misses and the availability of traffic wardens.

9 In my electorate alone only eight of 16 schools have WA Police-allocated traffic wardens. This is indicative of an ongoing statewide shortage. The current system lacks a degree of flexibility which contributes to unattended crossings and makes replacement wardens hard to find. Google CrossSafe Churchlands.

10 Another swimming pool for the City of Perth. Beauty. It never rains, it pours.

Basil Zempilas is the State Opposition Leader