



Government sidesteps idea for rural scholarship idea

A CALL for state scholarships to assist and attract rural students to study for careers such as teaching, nursing, allied health and medicine has been shunted sideways by the Education Minister.

The suggestion was raised in Parliament last week by Shadow Mid West and Wheatbelt Minister Brian Ellis, after lobbying by the Curtin Student Guild.

“Research shows that graduates from rural and regional areas are four times more likely to work in those areas,” Mr Ellis said.

“I therefore asked the Minister if the Carpenter Government would set aside funding to provide annual scholarships.

“I am aware that a scholarship for rural journalism was recently launched in New South Wales and I think there is no need for WA to lag behind this kind of incentive.

“As I feel the scholarships are a great idea, I asked the Minister to provide any reasons

for a refusal.

“I also asked the Minister to provide financial details of scholarships and implementation dates if the Government has decided to proceed with the idea.

“However, the Minister replied that he couldn’t provide the information in the time available, and asked for the question to be put on notice.

“In other words he has fobbed off the question.

“This is the minister who could only entice two retired teachers back to the workforce when he was bragging about a program which would attract 1000.

“This same minister has spent thousands of dollars advertising around the world for teachers when he could be offering that money to WA country kids to be trained to take up those positions in their own districts.

“It wouldn’t take much imagination to provide a financial incentive for country students.”