



Speech by

Hon. D. WELLS

MEMBER FOR MURRUMBA

Hansard 6 August 1998

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Leading Schools Program

Hon. D. M. WELLS (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Education) (9.52 a.m.), by leave: During my first week as Minister for Education, I visited Calamvale Special School, which was a Phase 2 Leading School designated as such by the Education Department, presided over at the time by the member for Merrimac. I table a list of special schools provided to me by the department, indicating that Calamvale Special School was a Phase 2 Leading School.

The designation of Phase 2 Leading Schools began at a very early time. I table the form letter dated 4 December 1997 which advised a large number of Phase 2 Leading Schools that they had been accepted into the Leading Schools program. Acceptance entailed eligibility to participate in programs of professional development for Phase 2 Leading Schools only, and these were held under the previous Government. Phase 2 Leading Schools had a legal and institutional status different from that of excluded schools and it gave those schools the opportunity to make investments in the confidence that sums of money promised to Phase 2 Leading Schools in the enterprise bargain agreement would be forthcoming.

I pay tribute to the staff of Calamvale Special School, one of whom described to me in moving detail the circumstances I referred to the other day, and the parents who took part in the process of that school becoming accredited as a Leading School. Calamvale is not in a socioeconomically privileged area and it takes special efforts for parents of special students, whose parental responsibilities are more pressing than those of other parents, to jump through the hoops required for their school to become a Leading School.

There were many school communities, however, who lost out. I table the letter which went to them. Again, this was dated as early as 4 December 1997. Among special schools, those which did not have the status of Leading Schools and which were not able to anticipate the legal and institutional advantages of Leading Schools included Royal Children's Hospital Special School, Mundingburra Special School, Red Hill Special School, Inala Special School, Claremont Special School, Mudgeeraba Special School, Montrose Special School, Gympie Special School, Logan City Special School, Toowoomba West Special School, Aspley Special School, Woody Point Special School, Redland District Special School, Nambour Special School, Clifford Park Special School, Aitkenvale Special School, Geebung Special School, Kuraby Special School, Bundaberg Special School, Mount Ommaney Special School, Ipswich Special School, Currimundi Special School, Maryborough Special School, Mitchelton Special School, Kewarra Special School, Tennyson Special School, Ipswich West Special School and Xavier Special School.

It really is the case, as I said to the House the other day, that the hard edge of Leading Schools was that one little special school child would get a benefit and another would not.
