



Speech by

**Dr LESLEY CLARK**

**MEMBER FOR BARRON RIVER**

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Hansard 30 November 1999

#### **SMITHFIELD STATE HIGH SCHOOL**

**Dr CLARK** (Barron River—ALP) (10.21 a.m.): Two weeks ago, I joined Education Minister Dean Wells on a very special occasion—the opening of the new Information Technology Centre at the Smithfield State High School. Honourable members may remember that last October I told the House of the arson that destroyed the IT building, which also housed the radio studio. Students and staff lost vital resources and thousands of hours of work. The Cairns community and other schools rallied behind Smithfield, coming forward with offers of support and replacement computers, and the Far North Queensland Assistance Fund initiated a fundraising appeal. The Education Minister flew to Cairns days after the fire, and I am proud to say that the Government made a commitment to the principal, school council and the P & C not just to replace what was lost but to create a state-of-the-art building designed with input from the school to take advantage of recent advances in technology so that students could continue to produce award-winning work at the cutting edge in multimedia and information technology.

The result is the centre opened by the Minister, which houses three fully equipped computer labs, space for teaching and technical staff and a sophisticated lecture theatre for multimedia preparation and presentation. The radio studio has been restored and incorporated in another teaching block with upgraded facilities, and a new computer lab has been added to the arts building, where creativity and technology will be melded into multimedia productions—all at a total cost of approximately \$1.1m.

I take this opportunity to thank Minister Dean Wells for his commitment to the Smithfield State High School and to congratulate the Principal, Larry Gallagher; Elaine Oliver, the President of the School Council; Brendan Delargy, the President of the P & C; and IT staff, in particular John Hamilton for his vision and commitment. Under this leadership the school has dedicated itself to ensuring that Smithfield and its students will continue to be at the forefront of IT education and achievement in Queensland schools.

I have no doubt that students from Smithfield will make a significant contribution to Queensland's goal to become the Smart State and I look forward to updating this House on their future success. The capability of the IT centre will be put to the test in the New Year, when the Smithfield State High School will be the first State school in Queensland to offer Years 11 and 12 students with a Certificate II in Arts, Interactive Media in conjunction with the prestigious QANTM Corporation Multimedia Centre, Queensland's largest multimedia company.

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