



Speech by

**Mr R. QUINN**

**MEMBER FOR MERRIMAC**

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Hansard 18 July 2000

### **SECONDARY SCHOOLS RENEWAL PROGRAM**

**Mr QUINN** (Merrimac—LP) (Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party) (10.26 a.m.): All schools should have good facilities for teaching and learning but the State Secondary Schools Renewal Program is simply unfair. It is unfair because only 63 out of a total of almost 200 State secondary schools are eligible for funding under this scheme. There are 62 schools that were opened prior to 1975 that are not eligible because they are not under competitive threat from the non-Government school sector. Many of these schools are amongst the oldest in the State and have facilities in urgent need of upgrading.

For instance, the Charters Towers State High School was opened in 1912; it is not eligible. Gympie State High School opened in 1912; it is not eligible. Ayr State High School opened in 1937; it is not eligible. Maryborough State High School opened in 1936; it is not eligible. Schools that opened in the 1950s—at Dalby, Ingham and Innisfail—are not eligible. Schools opened in the 1960s—Home Hill, Isis district, Malanda, Yeppoon and Tully—are not eligible.

Many of these schools are the only high schools in towns and districts and therefore parents have no choice other than to send their children to boarding schools. These schools have some of the lowest retention rates in the State—that is, the percentage of students completing Year 12 is extremely low, yet the main reason for this program is to improve the retention rates in schools. Yet the lowest retention rates are in the country and regional high schools. Because of their isolation and low socioeconomic status, students of these schools are some of the most educationally disadvantaged in the State. Only 15 of the 63 eligible schools are outside the Noosa/Toowoomba/Gold Coast triangle. The vast majority of them are in south-east Queensland, where the retention rates are higher.

Time expired.

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