



Speech by

**Hon. D. WELLS**

**MEMBER FOR MURRUMBA**

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Hansard 11 April 2000

### **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

#### **School Opinion Surveys**

**Hon. D. M. WELLS** (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Education) (10.10 a.m.), by leave: There has been a significant increase in confidence in our public school system as measured by the school opinion survey. I might mention that the increase in confidence between 1998 and 1999 comes on top of the quantum leap in confidence between 1997 and 1998. This new lift in confidence not only sustains that previous leap but also builds on it. The school opinion surveys measure the opinions of parents and students on critical factors of schooling—quality curriculum, effective teaching, improved learning outcomes, confidence in public education, technology for learning and learning environment. The surveys have been conducted from 1997 to 1999.

School opinion surveys of staff views on their school as a workplace were first conducted on a full scale in 1999. The surveys clearly demonstrate the following: across the years 1997 to 1999, there has been a steady increase in the satisfaction of parents and students with technology for learning. This covers both access to computers and skill and confidence in using computers. Parents' satisfaction with information technology increased by 2.4% between 1997-98 and 3.63% between 1998-99. Students' satisfaction with information technology increased 7% between 1997-98 and 5.3% between 1998-99.

Parents' satisfaction with the learning environment of State schools—student safety, discipline and behaviour—has increased significantly in the last 12 months of the survey period. Similarly, parental confidence in State schooling and the effectiveness of teaching has shown significant improvements. Staff overwhelmingly share positive views about their workplace, and staff rate schools as safe environments, are happy with relationships with their peers and with students and with the level of responsibility that they are encouraged to take.

Apart from technology for learning, student opinion on State schooling remained at the same levels as in previous years with the majority of students on most questions being very positive about their schooling. For example, students believed that their teachers' explanation of school work was well done and that their teachers took an interest in them and helped them do their best. In the area of improved learning outcomes, students felt that they were kept informed about their progress and that teachers helped them in improving their work. Overall some 60% to 70% of students were extremely positive about their State schooling experience, with only some 15% expressing concerns.

Parent levels of satisfaction with State schooling were invariably high—a clear demonstration of the support for the quality of State education across all six areas and evidence that parents are well informed about the improvements that have been funded by Government and achieved by teachers. It is instructive to note that the area of public confidence in State education improved significantly from 1998 to 1999. On average, 80% of parents of State school children are satisfied or very satisfied with the schooling that their children are receiving.

Some 75% of staff are satisfied or very satisfied with their school as a workplace, with only 10% on average expressing concerns. In a work force as large as this—some 45,000 staff responded to the survey—working in over 1,300 sites across Queensland, it is a significant affirmation by staff, by teachers and support staff of their work environment. Sincere thanks are due to all school staff—to their teachers, the teacher aides, the support staff—for the excellent contribution that they have made on behalf of our school children, a contribution which is leading to improved learning outcomes. I would

also thank our parents, who have worked in partnership with staff to support students and participate in creating a positive environment for learning in our schools. I congratulate parents on the faith that they have shown in our great State school system.

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