



Speech by

JULIE ATTWOOD

MEMBER FOR MOUNT OMMANEY

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EDUCATION (QUEENSLAND STUDIES AUTHORITY) BILL

Mrs ATTWOOD (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (3.11 p.m.): Last night I attended the annual general meeting of the Jamboree Community Kindergarten. It was encouraging to see the extent of parent support at the meeting. All of the activities provided by the centre over the last 12 months were listed in the director's report. The diverse range of learning activities involved a number of events which prepare young people for the years of education ahead of them.

All levels of preschool, primary and secondary education are equally important to a child's progressive development and their social interaction with others. Education is becoming more and more holistic. Teachers, out of necessity, are being required in some areas to deal with a child's psychological and behavioural issues. Education of the whole person means not just the imparting of knowledge but also teaching the student how to deal with their immediate environment.

The Beattie government is aware of the needs of our children in this current environment and the difficulties they face. I am delighted with the quality of education provided at all levels in the electorate of Mount Ommaney. I keep in contact with schools and P&Cs where possible on a regular basis. They tell me what they need to make their children's education more effective. Over the last few years I have lobbied ministers and achieved for my schools an extension to the Middle Park State School library and various additions, maintenance, repairs and enhancements to facilities at Jindalee State School, Jindalee preschool, Jamboree Heights State School, Corinda State School and Oxley State School. Many thousands of dollars have been spent on each state school in the area over the last few years, over and above their standard allocation. I have been able to assist private schools to receive special grants and funding to improve their facilities.

It is part of my role as the local member to assist wherever I can to take the concerns of parents, schoolteachers and students back to government. The safety of our children is of utmost importance to me. Traffic around the schools continues to be a problem, particularly around pick-up and drop-off time. P&Cs and safety committees attempt to find solutions to potential safety issues for their children. Recently I was successful in lobbying the minister for an internal car park at Jindalee State School. This joint project with the BCC will greatly benefit surrounding residents and, by decreasing the number of cars on the road at drop-off and pick-up time, will improve child safety. The welfare and future of children and students in Queensland schools and preschools are this government's priorities. Legislation which reflects this commitment is a direct result of the Queensland State Education 2010 strategy.

The Mount Ommaney electorate's population supports 11 schools in the area. Eight of these are state schools and the remaining three are private, each of different religious faiths—Anglican, Catholic and Lutheran. I take great pride in the achievements of students in all of these schools. Each school is unique in the way they provide learning opportunities to our young people. Many awards have been given to students who have excelled in certain areas in their education. These schools continue to produce quality educational opportunities for all who attend.

Corinda State High School continually produces a high percentage of the state's award winning students. The principal, Bernadette O'Rourke, takes a personal interest in each student and encourages high standards of behaviour and performance. Her students have gone on to be highly acclaimed sportspeople, one example being Natalie Cook, Olympic gold medallist in volleyball. Dux of

the school in 2000, Dylan Tovey, won the coveted T. J. Ryan award. These students set a fine example to others by returning to address the school at speech nights.

The principal and the P&C at Corinda High lobbied me when I was first elected for an upgrade of facilities to match the quality of learning at the school. The Beattie government allocated \$7.2 million to construct a performing arts centre, a sports centre and an information technology facility, all of which have now been completed. The official opening of these facilities will occur soon by the Hon. Minister for Education, Anna Bligh.

When I became elected I wanted to ensure that local residents were consulted over construction issues affecting the local environment of stages 2 and 3 of the Centenary State High School. Residents' concerns were dust, noise and traffic congestion, particularly along Moolanda Street bordering the length of the school. Unlike the previous member, I ensured that locals were fully informed about the progress of these stages. Issues were addressed and continue to be addressed by the contractor, Education Queensland and the principal. I thank the Minister for Education for her support in relation to making funding available for the timely completion of these projects.

The Centenary suburbs and surrounding areas are continuing to grow, and more families are choosing state education. The need for appropriate facilities to match the diversity of curriculum available and the growing population of this school increases at the start of each term. The Centenary State High School was established in the Centenary suburbs in 1998 and now has a school population of over 1,000 students. The Centenary High School provides an excellent curriculum in the arts. I have attended a number of performances by students and have been impressed with the enthusiasm and professionalism displayed by participants.

These schools provide the basis for the individual to make appropriate career choices. It is essential in today's competitive job market that students complete year 12. The transition from schooling to post-school options needs to be supported and we need to ensure there are no learning gaps which would interrupt the transition. It is important that the education system in Queensland becomes more flexible to follow the changing job market.

The Education (Queensland Studies Authority) Bill 2001 is consistent and supportive of the Queensland State Education 2010 strategy. This bill is about flexibility in the state education system. The legislation will subsume QSCC, QBSSSS and TEPA into one authority. It allows the new authority to advise the minister on and have responsibility for syllabus development, assessment, certification and tertiary entrance across diverse P-12 contexts and settings with articulation to post-school destinations.

There is a strong emphasis on the correlation between syllabus and post-school education and training. The authority's ability to accredit syllabuses and preschool guidelines developed by entities other than the authority will ensure that students will have access to the best syllabuses throughout Australia and the world. I believe that this bill will result in Queensland students receiving the best learning opportunities available and will draw on a wide range of diversity, innovation and expertise outside of the state. It will truly make Queensland the Smart State.
