



Speech by

# STUART COPELAND

MEMBER FOR CUNNINGHAM

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Hansard 31 May 2001

## SCHOOL MUSIC PROGRAMS

**Mr COPELAND** (Cunningham—NPA) (7.28 p.m.): I am going to disagree with the member for Mansfield, because last week I had the great pleasure of attending the Toowoomba and Darling Downs showcase awards for excellence as part of Education Week in Toowoomba. There are many good news stories in our schools and this was an occasion to highlight those.

I had the great honour of presenting the Drayton State School year 3 class with certificates and cheques for being the statewide winners in the preschool to year 3 category of the Share a Song competition. The year 3 class performed its winning song at the expo. Besides being the cutest choir anyone had ever seen, the song has an appeal that transcends age or country. It truly is a wonderful achievement with lyrics that are meaningful and heartfelt, completely developed by the year 3 class.

The teacher responsible, Jenny Maskelyne, explained that the process involved the children listening to the music over and over again, exploring the theme of friendship and what it means to them and their country and clapping the rhythm of the music. Gradually the words and phrases became part of their story and song. It is a wonderfully positive song, direct from the mouths of the young. If anyone would like a copy of the song, I have the lyrics with me.

**Honourable members:** Sing it!

**Mr COPELAND:** But even better than that, I invite honourable members to attend the 150th anniversary of the Drayton State School later this year where the song will be performed by the people who can actually sing.

The winners of the Darling Downs section of the showcase award for excellence were a joint effort from the Pittsworth State School and the Pittsworth State High School. Instrumental music has been a vital part of the Pittsworth schools for over two decades, aiming at delivering world-class results and developing a positive community profile. Throughout that time the two schools have engaged in a successful, mutually beneficial partnership creating a culture that values, promotes and celebrates both participation and excellence in music.

The instrumental music programs have significant positive outcomes for the students involved, both in terms of recreation and general life skills as well as launching careers in music for increasing numbers of particularly talented musicians. The programs have also developed a strong cultural tradition in the schools and in the community. Students are supported and develop through a program of tuition, group work, rehearsal and performance at the Pittsworth State School—programs which are then extended at the high school, which also offers the curriculum subject of Music in years 8 to 12 plus extension Music (Performance) in year 12 for tertiary bound students. Pittsworth students have achieved recognition and received many prestigious awards at school and in their careers both in Australia and overseas.

There are many logistical problems in developing musical skills in regional communities, including access to tutors and music events and the inflated costs in time and money. However, the Drayton State School, the Pittsworth State School and the Pittsworth State High School are developing students with a love of music, providing a complete education and offering a rewarding career for many. I congratulate them on their achievements and thank them for the contribution they are making to the cultural identity of the Cunningham electorate.

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