



Speech by

**Mr T. MALONE**

**MEMBER FOR MIRANI**

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Hansard 16 May 2001

#### **FINCH HATTON SCHOOL**

**Mr MALONE** (Mirani—NPA) (7.13 p.m.): Tonight I rise to raise a very serious issue with Education Queensland concerning the replacement of teachers in schools, and particularly principals. There was a time when principals were replaced at the end of each school year rather than during the year. The issue I have concerns a small school at the top end of the Pioneer Valley—the Finch Hatton School, where at the end of last year the principal was transferred and at the beginning of this school year another relief principal was brought in on contract for six months through till June.

In the lead-up to the Easter holidays, on the Thursday before Easter, this teacher was handing out Easter eggs and saying goodbye to the kids and, 'See you after Easter,' yet upon going home that night he found a letter from Education Queensland stating that his services were no longer required at that school and that he was to turn up at another school after Easter. The fact of the matter is that the school community at Finch Hatton works well with its teachers. This new acting principal was doing a great job. The school community was very friendly and cooperative with him.

In the interim, the school got very upset about it and complained to the Education Department, but that was to no avail. The acting principal put in for the job but did not even receive an interview. The issue I take up in the case of all schools is that I think principals should be replaced only at the end of a school year rather than during a school year. I would like to table some documents that came into my possession—a letter to the minister that included 27 signatures from the school community, and some articles that made it into the local newspapers in Mackay headed 'Finch Hatton parents query teacher's move' and 'Handling of school job upsets parents', and also a letter to the editor. I seek leave to have those tabled.

Leave granted.

**Mr MALONE:** I believe strongly that our school and students are a very important part of our community. I believe it is very important for Education Queensland to realise that changing school principals during the year is not the best way to go about it, particularly in our smaller schools where the school principal is the major component of the teaching staff. In our smaller schools the parents of the children play a big part in the running of the school and they are very cooperative and work very hard to make sure that the school is successful. I believe Education Queensland needs to review its position.

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