



Speech by

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MEMBER FOR IPSWICH WEST

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WALLOON STATE SCHOOL

Mr LIVINGSTONE (Ipswich West—ALP) (5.42 p.m.): It is appropriate at this time to acknowledge the outstanding achievement of the Walloon State School in reaching its 125th anniversary. The school is justifiably proud of its long history of delivering quality education to the children of Walloon and surrounding districts for so many years. The school actually commenced its life in 1865 under the name of Guilfoyles Creek. However, the Walloon State School was officially established and opened on 9 July 1877, with one-fifth of the costs being raised by the local community. Can anyone imagine in this day and age if we opened a school and the local community had to raise one-fifth of the costs? We would get hung. I also note that most of the people who lived in that area were railway workers on very low incomes.

The history of the school reveals that parents had to struggle to raise this money and to continue to contribute for improvements over the years, especially through the Depression and other difficult periods such as two world wars. Despite these hardships, each generation of parents has understood the importance of providing an education for their children, and even today the school would be greatly disadvantaged without the wonderful contribution of parents, friends and volunteers.

From an era where children would have been issued with little more than a slate and slate pencils, the students of today have excellent educational resources, and with computers and Internet access they are provided with everything necessary to take them forward into the 21st century. Today's students have opportunities to explore specialised areas of education such as music, science and languages other than English, but they are also confronted with a much more complex and challenging world than that of the first students at the school in 1877.

Walloon State School's very first teacher was a Mr Kemp, who came from an area now known as Haigslea. I have no doubt that he would be gratified to see the progress that has been made in the last 125 years, as evidenced by the Smart State programs that are so much a part of our school system today. In a world that is changing more rapidly than at any time during the history of this or any other school, I congratulate the teaching staff and the supporting parents and citizens association on their efforts in providing the Walloon State School students with every opportunity to participate in successful future careers.