



Speech by

Mark McArdle

MEMBER FOR CALOUNDRA

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STATE SCHOOLS, CALOUNDRA

Mr McARDLE (Caloundra—Lib) (10.18 p.m.): There is little doubt that education is one of the benefits of our society. That is self-evident. We have those who choose or desire to send their children to private schools, but there are many who need to choose public schools and it is about state schools in Caloundra that I want to make a few comments tonight. We know that throughout south-east Queensland there is a growing need—and I may say increasingly so—to cater for a wave of people entering this great state. Naturally, we have an obligation to ensure that children are educated and, more so, we need to ensure that schools are located to cater for the wave I referred to.

The state schools in Caloundra number six. The last state school opened was Talara primary school as a consequence of population pressure. Those pressures are felt throughout all of south-east Queensland; I readily acknowledge that. However, I note Unity College located in Caloundra west for preschool to year 12, a non-public school, has been approved and will accept students on 31 January 2006.

Naturally, as I said, many people choose to send their children to state schools and also to public schools, yet Caloundra is urgently in need of a new state school. The minister, in her answer to my question on notice No. 138 concerning the purchase of land to construct another state school in the Caloundra electorate, advised that negotiations for the purchase of land had commenced. I accept that commercial transactions need to be kept under wraps until they are concluded. Therefore I asked the minister, based on her statement, the following questions. Firstly, what was the government's planned date to conclude the purchase of land in Caloundra on which to construct a new state school? Secondly, has that date varied and, if so, what is the planned new date? Thirdly, irrespective of the date of purchase, what is the planned date that the new school will accept students from? Fourthly, what grades will the new school cater for? As we all know, we cannot continue to place children throughout south-east Queensland into existing state schools. They just cannot take the numbers.