



Speech by

Hon. Rod Welford

MEMBER FOR EVERTON

Hansard Wednesday, 7 June 2006

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

State Education Week

Hon. RJ WELFORD (Everton—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for the Arts) (9.57 am): This week is State Education Week—a time to focus on and celebrate some of the tremendous achievements in our state schools. State Education Week involves many activities at more than 1,270 state schools. But none of these would be possible without the commitment, enthusiasm and skill of our state school principals, teachers, teacher aides and support staff. It is a week where schools proudly display their achievements, and our state schools are producing some extraordinary students. On Saturday night I witnessed some of these talented students when I attended Creative Generation—State Schools on Stage at the Queensland Performing Arts Complex. Featuring more than 550 students from over 60 schools from Cairns to the Gold Coast, the production reflected the passion, hard work and talent that underpins our state school system. It was the launch pad for a week of activities where our schools open their doors to the community to highlight their unique potential and capabilities. Sporting heroes, business leaders and media personalities have gone into our schools this week to see firsthand what is happening.

I will give members some examples. On Monday, more than 80 community and business leaders, including General Peter Cosgrove and the Governor of Queensland, Her Excellency Quentin Bryce, took up their roles of Principal for a Day. This program is helping to build partnerships between schools and their local communities and demonstrates how our education system is equipping young students for the future. Local identities, such as motor racing legend Dick Johnson and Brisbane Lions player Jason Akermanis, joined many past students around the state yesterday to go 'back to school' to share their experiences with students.

Later this week, the Showcase Awards for Excellence in Schools will highlight state school programs that are significantly improving student outcomes. Our younger students are also getting involved in voting for their favourite teachers. There have been more than 6,800 entries received as part of the My Favourite Teacher competition.

This is an exciting time in education in Queensland with strong enrolment growth, record investment in new facilities, innovative programs in senior schooling and the introduction of the prep year. We are building a modern, future focused education system that equips our young people for the challenges of the 21st century.

This week provides an opportunity for everyone to see firsthand what is happening in our schools. It is also a time to recognise and celebrate the passion, commitment and dedication of the many thousands of teachers, teacher aides and their support staff who can have such an important and enduring influence on tomorrow's Queenslanders.

Tabled paper: Copy of ministerial statement by Hon. R Welford titled 'State Education Week Celebrations'.