



Speech by

# Hon. Rod Welford

MEMBER FOR EVERTON

Hansard Tuesday, 21 August 2007

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## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### Literacy and Numeracy

**Hon. RJ WELFORD** (Everton—ALP) (Minister for Education and Training and Minister for the Arts) (10.08 am): The Beattie government is committed to improving the literacy and numeracy skills of young Queenslanders. Literacy and numeracy skills are the building blocks of learning, the basis upon which lifelong learning can occur and vital for young Queenslanders' success not only in education but also in the workplace and in broader society.

I am pleased to let members know that today more than 165,000 Queensland students from years 3, 5 and 7 in every school in the state—both state and non-state schools—will today be sitting their state based numeracy tests. Tomorrow, they will sit the literacy component of the literacy and numeracy tests. These tests, which are set by the Queensland Studies Authority, cover reading, writing, spelling, numbers, data, measurement and spacial reasoning. The test papers consist of multiple choice, open-ended questions and a writing task.

The tests are one way of assessing whether students are on track with their literacy and numeracy skills. The test will help teachers to identify students' strengths, determine where students need further attention and identify areas for improvement in curriculum and learning programs. In that respect, the tests have a highly valuable diagnostic effect.

However, this is the last time that Queensland students will sit these state based exams before a national testing regime is introduced next year. State and territory authorities have been working with the federal government to implement national common tests. From 2008, students in years 3, 5 and 7 and, for the first time in Queensland, year 9 will sit uniform tests on the same days as students in the rest of Australia. This testing program will commence next May. The nationally developed common tests will enable better comparisons of Queensland students with those of other states as all Australian students will be assessed equally against national benchmarks.

I extend my very best wishes to all students who are sitting the numeracy and literacy tests this week. I thank the thousands of teachers and school staff who do a wonderful job in our schools to educate, develop, and help shape the knowledge, skills and creative minds of young Queenslanders.