



Speech by

# Hon. Rod Welford

MEMBER FOR EVERTON

Hansard Wednesday, 31 October 2007

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## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### Better Behaviour, Better Learning Initiative

**Hon. RJ WELFORD** (Everton—ALP) (Minister for Education and Training and Minister for the Arts) (10.12 am): Our government places a high priority on providing safe, supportive and disciplined learning environments in all of our state schools. We want to ensure that students can go to school in an environment where bullying is not tolerated and there are clear boundaries for everyone. Last year we introduced a \$3 million Better Behaviour, Better Learning initiative to help state schools provide environments that promote high standards of achievement and responsible behaviour in all students. As part of this, we released a code of school behaviour and every state school was required to develop a responsible behaviour plan outlining the acceptable standards of behaviour in our schools. We are also providing support to our staff to improve their professional skills in dealing with challenging behaviours.

My department has developed an online professional development course in behaviour theory and practice for all Education Queensland employees, including teacher aides and staff located in rural and remote areas of the state. The course responds to a high demand from staff for improved professional development opportunities, something which I have encouraged all Education Queensland staff to be involved in. Piloted in the first semester this year, 100 participants signed up for the Better Behaviour, Better Learning course. Following this successful pilot, we have had 260 staff enrol in the course in semester 2—that is, a 160 per cent increase in demand.

Feedback from participants has been extremely positive and constructive, resulting in revision of the course to improve delivery and increase interactivity. The course runs over a 12-week period and involves participation in tasks, discussions and readings in an interactive forum. Additionally, participants may choose to undertake the course as part of a postgraduate university qualification and gain accreditation towards a masters degree. Not only is this an extremely popular course addressing the professional needs of our teachers but it is contributing to an integrated strategy to strengthen positive behaviour and learning among all Queensland students. Our government will continue to place a high priority on positive behaviour in our state schools to ensure the very best environment is available for teachers to teach and students to learn.