



Speech by

Steve Wettenhall

MEMBER FOR BARRON RIVER

Hansard Tuesday, 30 October 2007

REDLYNCH STATE COLLEGE

Mr WETTENHALL (Barron River—ALP) (12.09 pm): On Saturday, 27 October 2007 I had the privilege of representing the Hon. Rod Welford, Minister for Education and Training and Minister for the Arts, to officially open stage 1 of the Redlynch State College middle school in my electorate. The opening of stage 1 of this three-stage project realises the hopes and visions of the school community, which has been campaigning and working towards this goal for over eight years. In 2004 the state government formally committed to a middle school on this magnificent site adjacent to the existing primary school. That followed the Cairns Education Renewal Project which examined the educational needs of the entire Cairns community and resulted in the amalgamation of Kuranda high and primary schools and the construction of a \$4 million brand-new P-6 campus in my electorate.

The Education Renewal Project is a \$24 million investment in new and upgraded facilities, including a \$2 million student services centre for at-risk students beside the Cairns School of Distance Education, a \$1 million community learning centre at Woree State High School and a further \$1 million for upgraded facilities in nine schools around the region including Freshwater, Machans Beach, Whitfield and Trinity Beach state schools. Furthermore, a new \$7.79 million Isabella State Primary School opened at Edmonton. The renewal project in Cairns has been backed up by the education minister's announcement in June 2006 of the government's \$1 billion capital works investment over five years to modernise state schools throughout Queensland in addition to the 2006-07 allocation of \$427.1 million in the Capital Works Program.

The Redlynch Primary School opened on the current site on Jungara Road in 1994 with 165 students after relocating from its original site on Intake Road where it opened in 1932 with 32 students. The 1994 enrolment of 165 has grown rapidly as the district has expanded. This year the school was reclassified as a P-12 school and renamed Redlynch State College. The college has two campuses—prep to year 6 and the year 7 to 12 campus, which is presently accommodating years 7 and 8. In 2007 year 8 students enrolled in the school for the first time and the current total enrolment in years 7 and 8 is 241, with 114 year 8s and 127 year 7s.

Stage 1 of the middle school building project began in 2005. The site works and construction started in 2006 and was completed early this year for the start of the school year. Construction was carried out by Laing O'Rourke, which won a Master Builders award for its work on the school in the educational construction category over \$10 million. I congratulate the company and its representative Mr David Graham and architect Greg Gould. Stage 1 has included the construction of an administration block, middle school staff centre, general teaching block, creative technologies block, visual arts, food technology, science, performing arts and music, a canteen, a students with disabilities block, and sports and school offices block. The site is 1.2 hectares in the beautiful Freshwater Valley, one of the most scenic and attractive sites in Cairns and, as I am sure the school community would argue, anywhere in the state.

The total cost of stage 1 has been \$16.5 million funded by the Department of Education, Training and the Arts with a contribution from the Australian government as well. The college has deservedly won a reputation for excellence and is regarded highly in the community as a school that offers a unique range of

opportunities for students based on four tracks of learning—environmental education, sports science, technology education, and technology and creative arts. The college has established a vision that underpins all learning—learning in our valley and thinking beyond the hills.

The college has had extremely positive support from its Parents and Citizens Association, which is very active. I congratulate Ms Debbie Blackhall, Acting P&C President, and former presidents Margaret Baldock, Danielle Bowthorpe and Judy Hay. I also acknowledge the efforts of the former member for Barron River, Dr Lesley Clark, who supported the school community's campaign and vision for its project and lobbied tirelessly to see the school built. I also commend current principal, Richard Ruddell. The Department of Education, Training and the Arts has provided a further \$3.3 million to the college for other capital works since February 2001, including a second preschool unit, amenities block, covered areas, activities building, modular classroom buildings—

Time expired.