



Speech by  
**Murray Watt**

**MEMBER FOR EVERTON**

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## **EATONS HILL STATE SCHOOL**

**Mr WATT** (Everton—ALP) (9.16 pm): The recent funding announcement by Kevin Rudd's federal government was great news for Queensland primary schools. This means thousands of better classrooms, playgrounds and libraries for Australia's schools and thousands of jobs for tradespeople around the country.

This announcement was particularly good news to the students, parents and staff of Eatons Hill State School in my electorate. Since the school opened in 1998, the state government has provided many new facilities at the school including classrooms, administration areas, ovals and prep facilities. But it is still missing one thing—a school hall. The school's Parents and Citizens Association, ably led by Craig Gurnett, has spent years fundraising to build a school hall. Through blood, sweat and tears they have raised a huge sum, as well as getting funding from this state government and the local council, towards their hall.

But despite all of this, they were faced with having to take out a large loan to build their kids the hall they deserve. So they were very excited when they heard that Kevin Rudd's government was going to put money into every primary school around the country. Initially there was some confusion as to whether the school would qualify for funding. Sadly, the federal Liberal member for Dickson, Peter Dutton, made things even more uncertain by questioning in federal parliament whether the school was eligible for funding.

To ensure the school got funding, I worked hard for weeks with the school, its P&C and the federal member for Petrie, Yvette D'ath—and the school is not even in her electorate—to convince the state and federal governments that Eatons Hill State School was as deserving as any other in obtaining funding for its hall. Many phone calls were made, letters and emails were written and press releases were issued, all aimed at making sure the school would benefit from this funding.

So all involved with the school were immensely relieved to hear that the federal government will provide \$3 million in funding to the school to assist with the school hall and other facilities. This is the maximum amount of funding that a primary school can receive under this program. Getting this commitment means that the P&C can use its hard-earned funds for other projects around the school, and they will not be burdened by a large debt for years to come. This is obviously great news for the school, and it is also a big win for the Eatons Hill community as a whole.

Currently, Eatons Hill has no building in which to hold community events. Already a large number of community groups—including sporting clubs, church groups and adult education providers—have expressed interest in using the hall when it is built. I am really pleased for the school community and the whole of Eatons Hill that we have been able to guarantee that this hall will at last be delivered. It shows what is possible when members of parliament, a school's P&C and its staff work together to convince governments that their needs must be met. I look forward to this being the first of many successful efforts to get results for the people of Everton.