



Speech by


Hon. Cameron Dick

MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES

Hansard Tuesday, 10 May 2011

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

NAPLAN Tests

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Greenslopes—ALP) (Minister for Education and Industrial Relations) (10.19 am): Literacy and numeracy skills are the basic building blocks of learning. The Bligh government is committed to lifting individual student and school performance. Our goal is for Queensland to become one of the highest performing states in the nation. I am pleased to report to the House that Queensland is making strong progress in literacy and numeracy, and recent results are very encouraging.

Our students were the most improved in the country in NAPLAN testing between 2008 and 2010, showing significant improvements in average scores in 19 of the 20 testing areas. In addition, Queensland was the only state to achieve all its performance targets in 2010 in the National Partnership Agreement on Literacy and Numeracy. Furthermore, the Program for International Student Assessment report also found Queensland was well above the OECD average and among the top performing states and territories in Australia in the 2009 tests.

Maintaining this rate of improvement will be a challenge, but we are determined to see Queensland at the top of the class. The good progress we are seeing has been achieved through the hard work of students, teachers, principals and parents. Significant Labor government reforms and initiatives have also assisted. These include the introduction of the prep year in 2007 and the raising of the school starting age to bring Queensland into line with other states; set teaching hours for English, maths and science in primary school; summer schools for year 5 to year 7 students who need extra help with literacy and numeracy; intensive teaching for year 3 to year 5 students requiring additional support; the Premier's Reading Challenge, which commenced yesterday for 2011 and encourages primary school students to get into books; and the Queensland Ready Reader and Parent Ready Reader programs which train volunteers and parents to help young Queenslanders read.

Over the next three days, around 230 000 state, Catholic and independent school students across Queensland will sit the 2011 NAPLAN tests. These tests assess how years 3, 5, 7 and 9 students are progressing in the areas of reading, writing, punctuation and grammar, spelling and numeracy. NAPLAN tests are designed to give educators an accurate snapshot of student performance at a point in time so extra resources can be directed where needed. But these tests are only one of many indicators used to assess student performance. They are not the be-all and end-all of student testing so students should not feel unnecessary pressure.

As education minister, I want to ensure that all Queensland students are progressing and are on the way to reaching their full potential. It is in everyone's best interests for all eligible students to participate so teachers and parents know how each student is progressing and are able to help them continue to improve. I conclude by wishing all Queensland students the very best in the NAPLAN tests which begin today.