



Speech by

Hon. Cameron Dick

MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES

Hansard Wednesday, 15 June 2011

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Budget, Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program



Hon. CR DICK (Greenslopes—ALP) (Minister for Education and Industrial Relations) (10.55 am): The Queensland government is committed to enhancing the health and wellbeing of young Queenslanders. As a result, we provide students with a range of opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills so they can lead healthy lives. As an example of this, since 2005 the Department of Education and Training has implemented strategies such as the Smart Choices Healthy Food and Drink Supply Strategy and the Smart Moves physical activity strategy to ensure all state schools are healthy places for students to learn. Schools also have access to a range of quality programs to enhance a school-wide approach to health and nutrition.

To that end, I am pleased to announce that this year's state budget includes \$1.82 million to support the ongoing implementation of the national Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program in state primary schools in Queensland. This program supports schools in building their own gardens and kitchens to help students learn about healthy cooking and eating. In fact, students in years 4 to 7 from schools that adopt the Stephanie Alexander program are exposed to a range of hands-on experiences as they grow, cook and share freshly grown foods.

Students are supported by kitchen and garden specialists as part of the program, and they get the chance to design and build a garden where they grow their own fresh produce. They then use this produce to prepare healthy, delicious food for themselves, their families and their school communities. This program has already proved to be popular and worthwhile at Bulimba State School, which is a demonstration site for the program in Queensland. The member for Bulimba is a great champion of this program, and I know that she and other members of the government will welcome this announcement.

Students who have participated in the program have shown an increased willingness to try new foods and have improved their knowledge, confidence and skills in cooking and gardening as a result. The Bligh government is keen to build on this success, and the funding allocation in the 2011-12 budget will allow a further 25 state primary schools to take part, doubling the number of Queensland schools currently involved. This is a positive program that will help us achieve our Toward Q2 health targets by encouraging healthy eating habits among young Queenslanders.