



Speech by

**Hon. Cameron Dick**


**MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES**

Hansard Tuesday, 29 November 2011

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## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Education Reform**

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Greenslopes—ALP) (Minister for Education and Industrial Relations) (9.49 am): Education reform and improvement are the hallmarks of the Bligh Labor government. With the changes we have been making over the past decade, we are building a bright future for young Queenslanders. As part of our reform agenda, we are on track to provide all Queensland children access to a quality kindergarten program by 2014. We have already created an extra 22½ thousand places in a bid to make kindy more accessible. We have allocated an extra \$500,000 to provide community kindergartens with extra resources for children with a disability, and we have extended fee relief to healthcare card holders, making kindergarten cheaper for low-income families.

But it does not stop there. I am pleased to announce today that the Bligh government is removing another barrier to kindy participation by offering reduced fees for families with triplets or more who attend kindy in the same year. With this subsidy, parents can save up to almost \$1,200 per year for each child. We are directly reducing the out-of-pocket costs for parents who would otherwise be faced with a triple whammy in kindy fees. These families might be experiencing triple the joy but they also face triple the expenses when it comes to kindy. We want to help all young Queenslanders get the best possible start to their education and recognise that some families need extra support to take advantage of the opportunities available to their children.

The Bligh government's commitment to improving our education system continues, with the Premier last week announcing the proposal to establish the Queensland Education Trust. This proposal will take our reform agenda to the next level and will fundamentally change the way education is funded in this state. This visionary policy will ensure Queensland continues to reap the benefits of the LNG industry for generations to come. The From Mines to Minds proposal is about ensuring our children have the education opportunities to capitalise on the economic benefits of the LNG industry and help make our great state even greater. We want to take the wealth generated from our finite resources and invest it in an infinite resource—the potential of our children. We have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to create an even brighter future for our children, and Labor is ready to help Queenslanders grasp this opportunity with both hands.