



Speech by


Hon. Campbell Newman

MEMBER FOR ASHGROVE

Hansard Wednesday, 12 September 2012

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Education

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (2.05 pm): The LNP government is promising a once-in-a-generation change for our schoolchildren. Under Labor we had a generation of Queensland schoolchildren who were short-changed. Education represents an investment in opportunity: giving our children opportunities and the tools to make the most of those opportunities. In return for that investment, our economy is stronger, our community is more prosperous, our industries are better skilled and our quality of life is enriched. Today's education is tomorrow's economy. No matter how well we build the four pillars of Queensland's economy, all of them have a reliance on the foundation of education.

Like a typical Labor government, the federal government has cynically used the Gonski report to try to make out it cares about education. As usual, Labor's announcements are short on details, are unfunded—what a surprise that would be for a Labor policy!—and offer no hope for genuine reform for this generation. Our government will not succumb to the haphazard and short-sighted attitudes that have characterised the Labor agenda. We cannot, and we will not, commit to Labor's vague and visionless federal plan.

Yesterday's budget is so important to Queensland because it means we can stop wasting \$500 million on interest repayments by 2015-16 and start directing funds toward economic foundations such as education. We are concentrating on our vision for a world-class education system that gives our students opportunities from crayon through to career. Our government will ensure the best possible start for our children through our \$54 million program to provide full-time prep teacher aides. Parents can be reassured that their children are receiving the best educational opportunities and outcomes. We want to ensure that teachers can have confidence in our education system and parents can have confidence in the quality of our teachers.

Our government supports local decision making for schools, and we have cut red tape with our \$3 million commitment to independent public schools and a further \$2 million to the Schools Plan Commission. After years of Labor neglect, we are dedicating \$200 million over the next two years to go a fair distance towards fixing the school maintenance backlog and giving our children safe, comfortable and attractive places to learn.

We will provide pathways beyond the school gate by reviewing our training system and creating a much more industry responsive and prosperity-generating skills sector. A good example of this is our announcement of a \$4.8 million partnership with the Queensland University of Technology for research into tropical pulses. This is an example of how education in science initiatives is able to provide economic benefits for both our state and industries and, importantly, future career opportunities for our children. What is more, we will give our children the tools for their future, and in return they will help our state thrive by contributing to our communities and to our state's economy.