



Speech by

Dale Shuttleworth

MEMBER FOR FERNY GROVE

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EDUCATION LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Mr SHUTTLEWORTH (Ferny Grove—LNP) (4.59 pm): I rise this afternoon to give my support to the Education Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. This bill aims to amend the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 to enable state schools of distance education to deliver an e-kindy to eligible children. The teacher-led multimedia format of learning is preparing our young children for their commencement in the prep year of schooling. This is further advancement along the line towards universal access to quality and consistent early education as agreed by all jurisdictions in 2008.

Whilst most families in Queensland and certainly those in the south-east corner are able to access quality education centres, there are those within remote and regional areas that are not afforded the same luxury. Even within these highly populated areas there are those children who, unfortunately, through extended illness are also deprived of the benefits of kindergarten education. They will also be able to access advanced e-kindy through this program. The program will also provide a significant foundation to those individuals who are not able to transition to more recognisable distance education programs through the school of distance education as they transition through e-kindy on to their normal schooling years. Changes to the school of distance education will be undertaken to ensure this program is delivered effectively and efficiently to the appropriate standards.

Another key component of this bill is the adoption of the national agreement to implement national professional standards for teachers. Like most of us here, I acknowledge the high standards of quality educators throughout the state, many of whom I enjoy working with throughout my electorate of Ferny Grove. However, like all professionals, the Queensland College of Teachers has a responsibility and a commitment to develop, maintain and continually enhance the professional standards of our teachers. Currently, the Queensland College of Teachers is not permitted to adopt standards developed and implemented through other jurisdictions including the national professional standards. This bill will amend the act to ensure that the national standards are adopted in lieu of Queensland standards. This initiative will ensure that, in line with our commitment, we will continue to remove burdensome regulation and red tape. This will also ensure that professionals throughout this sector will more easily be able to transfer and transition throughout the nation while maintaining their accreditation and registration nationally.

Within my electorate of Ferny Grove we have a very high number of Defence Force personnel, many transitioning into and out of our state many times throughout their career. There is, surprisingly, a large number of personnel who have teacher spouses. Without the capacity to transfer seamlessly, one professional career is detrimentally affected in order to pursue the other. Often, the one that gives way is that of the teacher. I believe that this will have a significantly positive effect on transitioning defence families throughout my and many other electorates across the state.

An additional component of this bill is to address the apparent ineffectiveness of the anniversary letters. There is a compulsion for letters to be issued each year through to the age of 17 for an individual that has been permanently excluded. This, too, is an area where we are able to significantly reduce the regulatory burden upon the department and in particular the persons undertaking anniversary letters throughout the more remote and regional areas of Queensland.

As a member who shares our government's commitment to effective education of our children—as it is in their hands that our future rests—I take great pleasure in commending the minister and his department for their work in preparing this bill. I commend the bill to the House.