




Speech by

Stephen Bennett

MEMBER FOR BURNETT

Hansard Tuesday, 13 November 2012

MOTION: EDUCATION, FUNDING

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (6.09 pm): Schooling is not just about assessment or teaching for tests; it is about ensuring that our children are equipped for all the challenges of life that will be thrown at them. As we know, learning to cope with these cannot be taught from a book. It is about learning life skills, how to get on with others and how to build resilience.

The budget invested more than \$20 million into programs and initiatives to enhance the educational experiences of Queensland students in the classroom. This includes an election commitment of \$4.9 million to provide full-time teacher aides in 150 prep classes each year in areas of greatest need. It also includes \$6.5 million to ensure principals are able to select the numeracy and literacy programs that will improve educational standards at their school. In fact, every state primary school in Queensland will benefit from this major funding boost before the end of the year.

This is part of the Newman government's \$26 million Getting the Basics Right—Literacy and Numeracy grants that will be spread over the next four years. The Newman government is committed to making Queensland one of Australia's leading states in literacy and numeracy achievement. These grants will be directed to students in the early years of their schooling and will be distributed based on need rather than enrolment figures. They will also enable our state schools to tailor literacy and numeracy programs to the specific needs of their students and school community.

Individual schools will be given the flexibility to decide how to invest the grants money to best meet the needs of their school and their students. That is because we believe that principals, teachers and parents are best placed to choose the literacy and numeracy programs that will suit the needs of their students and children. This will allow these important decisions to be made at a local level to ensure that young Queenslanders receive a quality education and a great experience.

For this reason, the Newman government will spend \$3 million next year on delivering another election commitment—our Independent Public Schools initiative. Next year, 26 schools will make history as Queensland's first independent public schools. We went to the election with a promise to lift educational standards in this state by giving schools greater control over their decision making, cutting red tape and removing layers of management.

Independent public schools will have the freedom to directly recruit teachers and to build a team that is able to deliver innovative educational practices and have more autonomy to manage infrastructure and financial resources. This is a massive step forward for these schools that will allow more control over local decisions to help them shape the future and improve student outcomes.

The Newman government is committed to working with principals, teachers, parents and the wider school community to deliver the very best education for our kids. My electorate welcomes the initiatives put forward. We know the Newman government is determined to see this goal realised.