




Speech By  
**Hon. John-Paul Langbroek**

**MEMBER FOR SURFERS PARADISE**

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**EDUCATION LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

**Second Reading**

 **Hon. JH LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Minister for Education, Training and Employment) (3.37 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I would like to thank the Education and Innovation Committee for its report tabled on 16 July 2013 regarding the Education Legislation Amendment Bill 2013. I am pleased to note that the committee supports the bill and recommends that it be passed. The committee also made a number of recommendations which I will now respond to.

The committee's second recommendation is that I confirm in the House that tuition fee charging practices for students listed on page 2 of the explanatory notes will not change as a result of the bill. Page 2 of the explanatory notes lists the type of international students who enrol in state schools in Queensland. These include refugees, children of asylum seekers, children of temporary skilled migrants, New Zealanders, persons on student visas and dependent students, that is, children of international visitors who are studying for vocational or higher educational qualifications. I am pleased to confirm for the committee and all members that there is no intention to amend the tuition fee charging practices for international students. The proposed amendments are not aimed at broadening charging practices but, rather, to support my department's ability to recoup outstanding tuition fees from those families who are charged fees, namely, parents of dependent students.

The committee's third recommendation is that I develop and publish on my department's website a fact sheet in simple English and relevant community languages to outline the process the department can take in the event that tuition fees for certain international students are not paid.

The government accepts this recommendation and confirms that a fact sheet will be posted on the Education Queensland International website. There is already a comprehensive section on this website regarding the enrolment of dependant students. Details will be added to this information about the process related to the cancellation of enrolment for nonpayment of tuition fees. Education Queensland International will also prepare a fact sheet to underpin this information and specifically address the issues raised by the committee.

The committee's fourth recommendation is that I amend the bill to require that 14 days notice be provided to fee-paying international students enrolled after commencement of the amendments. I am pleased that this was the only recommendation the committee made for amendment to the bill.

The government does not support this recommendation. I can nevertheless assure the committee and all members that the administrative practices used by my department to recoup outstanding tuition fees will support parents being given ample opportunity to rectify nonpayment and support the ongoing enrolment of affected students. The cancellation of enrolment will be a last resort following reminder letters and an invitation to enter into a payment plan. Enrolment will not be

cancelled without first advising parents of the outstanding fees and discussing various options to satisfy payment of the outstanding fees; however, it is not proposed to prescribe in the bill the cancellation process because it can be a seesawing one whereby plans are entered into and payment could stop and start several times. Parents will be able to apply to re-enrol their child at any time after cancellation subsequent to payment of outstanding fees.

The committee's fifth and final recommendation is that I amend the explanatory notes to correct some minor typographical errors. The government accepts this recommendation, and I now table an erratum to the explanatory notes to correct the typographical errors contained within.

*Tabled paper:* Education Legislation Amendment Bill 2013, erratum to explanatory notes [\[3273\]](#).

The committee also raised a number of points for clarification in its report. Responses to these matters are contained in the government's response to the committee's report, which I now table.

*Tabled paper:* Education and Innovation Committee: Report No. 11—Education Legislation Amendment Bill 2013, government response [\[3274\]](#).

However, I would like to respond specifically to the committee's first point of clarification regarding transitional arrangements for non-state schools moving to offer year 7 as secondary education from 2015. The committee has sought clarification about whether it might be appropriate to offer a streamlined accreditation process for non-state stand-alone primary schools that wish to continue to offer year 7 beyond 2015 as secondary education. Here the committee is referring to a primary school accredited to offer education from the preparatory year to year 7. The government believes that the transition processes proposed in the bill for stand-alone non-state primary schools is appropriate. A school wishing to offer year 7 as secondary education from 2015 onwards will be required to apply in the usual way to add secondary accreditation. As these schools are not experienced in providing secondary education, it is appropriate and reasonable that the Non-State Schools Accreditation Board has the capacity to assess the school's proposed educational program, facilities and staffing arrangements.

The bill enables the application to add secondary accreditation for year 7 to be processed before 2015, when the technical amendments changing the definitions of primary and secondary education will commence. Also, schools which are currently eligible for government funding for year 7 as primary will be deemed eligible for funding for year 7 as secondary. This may reduce processing time by as much as five months.

This bill provides necessary technical amendments to Queensland legislation to support the government's commitment to move year 7 to secondary school. It will provide transitional arrangements to support non-state schools to change their accreditation arrangements in preparation for the move of year 7. It will formally recognise the government's policy that the preparatory year is the first formal year of schooling in Queensland and the government's commitment to provide 13 years of state schooling. Finally, it will allow for the cancellation of the enrolment of international students at state schools for nonpayment of tuition fees. I commend the bill to the House