




Speech By  
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**MEMBER FOR ALBERT**

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**EDUCATION AND INNOVATION COMMITTEE: REPORT, MOTION TO TAKE  
NOTE**

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Albert—LNP) (11.16 am): I rise to speak to the Education and Innovation Committee's report titled *The assessment methods used in senior mathematics, chemistry and physics in Queensland schools*. Firstly, I would like to thank my fellow committee members for their work: the chair, Rosemary Menkens, Michael Latter, Neil Symes, Steve Bennett, Desley Scott and Ray Hopper. I feel it is appropriate to thank the committee staff for the extensive work they have had to undertake for this inquiry. They are: Bernice, Emily Gregory, Carolyn and Debbie. I would like to thank the educators—the teachers and lecturers—and all those who expressed their opinions in this all important inquiry.

The Education and Innovation Committee was asked to report on the assessment methods used in senior mathematics, chemistry and physics in Queensland schools which are administered by the Queensland Studies Authority. This inquiry invoked passionate responses from a broad spectrum of educators throughout the state. A total of 288 submissions were received. It was far-reaching and eye-opening information that we were assessing. I thank the education facilities in the Albert electorate—namely Windaroo Valley State High School—for making a submission to this inquiry.

The perceived catalyst for this inquiry is the declining participation rate and final results in mathematics, chemistry and physics due to the excessive workload placed upon the students and teachers for no perceived benefit, the lack of understanding by both teachers and students with regard to marking standards and the requirement for a high level of English language skills which could potentially disadvantage some student groups. Specialist teacher qualifications was another concern presented to the committee. This is not just a Queensland issue but is understood to be a national issue.

Due to the complexity of the inquiry and the highly valued submissions, the committee agreed upon 16 recommendations. Due to the limited time available to me today, I will highlight just two. The first recommendation I will highlight is recommendation 2, which states—

The committee recommends that an external exam count for 50% of a student's overall achievement mark in senior mathematics, chemistry and physics to:

- a) ensure an appropriate focus on content knowledge which, of the three criteria for each subject, is the one most readily testable by an exam task (and what is tested, gets taught)
- b) ensure an element of commonality in respect of content knowledge around the state, which makes comparing student scores more meaningful for employers and universities
- c) promote confidence in the validity of all of a student's final mark for a subject by increasing the likelihood of consistent assessment practices against a common task.

The other recommendation I would like to highlight is recommendation 13, which states—

The committee recommends that in the context of standards-based assessment, numerical marking be strongly promoted in maths, chemistry and physics alongside more specifically defined syllabus documents ... that include mark ranges to equate to each of the five standards of achievement for each criteria, to:

- a) increase clarity for students and teachers as to why particular standards of achievement are awarded
- b) ensure an appropriate focus is placed on content knowledge along with the higher order skills ...
- c) reduce workload for teachers
- d) enable employers and universities and importantly, students themselves to readily see what content a student knows and does not know.

With these few recommendations, I feel it has been a very well balanced inquiry. Most importantly, I do ask educators and parents to sit down and read this report. It has taken quite some time to put together, but it has been well worth it because it has been very informative and eye opening.