




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

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MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Premier's Reading Challenge

 **Ms GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (12.28 pm): I rise to speak to two important education initiatives. We on this side of the House understand that investing in Queensland's education system is investing in Queensland's future. The introduction of the prep year and the transition of year 7 students to high school are successful examples of our commitment. If education and training is the key, then I think that most in this House would agree that reading is the door. I very much welcome the Premier's Reading Challenge, which encourages our local schools to take up the Premier's reading challenge to help foster a love of books among children. As part of the Premier's Reading Challenge, which goes from 1 May to 28 August, students aim to read a minimum number of books.

I want to encourage all local schools, including those in my electorate, to take up the challenge because this is a great way to support existing literacy programs. For the first time the Premier's Reading Challenge has been extended to year 8 and 9 students and children in kindergartens and day care centres. The Premier's Reading Challenge is also open to all state and non-state schools and home-educated students.

During the challenge, prep to year 2 students aim to read or experience 20 books; year 3 to 4 students also aim to read 20 books; and year 5 to 9 students aim to read 15 books. This is all about encouraging our students to get more involved in reading. Schools, early childhood centres and parents of individual readers are encouraged to recognise reading achievements by holding classroom, school or home ceremonies to present certificates during the Premier's Reading Challenge celebration weeks in November. In my electorate of Brisbane Central the Windsor State School principal, Mr Steven O'Kane, has offered to host a pizza party for the class that reads the most—sometimes it is the little incentives such as this that makes reading and education fun. As we are all well aware, literacy skills are an important part of helping children succeed in their schooling. A love of books and reading is an important building block in helping young people reach their full potential. We read to my daughter from a very early age and my daughter, Alexandra, has always had a love of books.

The Palaszczuk government is determined to ensure that every child, no matter where they live, has access to quality education with the best teachers in the nation. That is why this government is committed to employing an extra 2,500 teachers in Queensland state schools. Let us not forget that the Premier's Reading Challenge is not a competition, but a way to encourage students to develop a love of reading for life. This challenge gives kids an opportunity to develop their appreciation of the English language and it encourages them to explore and enjoy a wide range of literary texts. The challenge is a great opportunity for classes to celebrate reading milestones. Students will also receive certificates of achievement signed by the Premier. I look forward to presenting many of these certificates of achievement to students in my electorate who complete their challenge during the Premier's Reading Challenge celebration weeks in November. I encourage all kids, as well as mums

and dads, to visit the Queensland government's Education Queensland website and click on the Premier's Reading Challenge. There they will find all the information they need: school registration, individual reader registration and, whilst not compulsory, a book list that has been developed to help kids from prep to years 8 and 9 in their selection of titles.

Education comes in many forms. On Tuesday, 21 April, along with the Premier and Minister for Education, I was delighted to have the pleasure of farewelling local winners of the 2015 Premier's Anzac Prize as they began a two-week adventure to Gallipoli and the Western Front. Anna Ruddell, Josefine Ganko and Laura Fell from Brisbane Girls Grammar School and Bailey Roth from the Queensland Academy for Creative Industries, all from my electorate of Brisbane Central, were among 70 Premier's Anzac Prize recipients throughout Queensland who were travelling to Turkey, Belgium and France for two weeks. Students were awarded the Premier's Anzac Prize after submitting a multimedia presentation about the Anzac tradition and its impact on the nation. Their education continues as we have been following their journey online through the Education Queensland website. These students have had a once-in-a-lifetime experience of a dawn service at Gallipoli on the 100th anniversary of the landing of our soldiers at Anzac Cove. It is truly a remarkable opportunity. Importantly, I look forward to seeing their reports which I believe are going to be on display at the State Library from July to September. They had a truly amazing education. They will share this with their school community and undoubtedly they have gained an incredible education through this amazing opportunity.