




Speech By
Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk

MEMBER FOR INALA

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Education

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (2.06 pm): Education is a priority for this government. That is why we have 290 new teachers above natural growth starting this year. That is why at the start of this week we announced three new schools as part of seven new schools for Queensland. That is why we have a \$300 million school maintenance program, we are putting more guidance officers in schools, and we have made prep compulsory from next year.

This morning I had the pleasure of joining the education minister to officially open the new \$2 million Autism Hub and Reading Centre at Woolloongabba. This is not just a Queensland first; it is an Australian first. We are leading the way. The new education centre in Woolloongabba will help students with autism and reading difficulties reach their full potential. The autism hub aims to improve educational outcomes for students with autism by providing links with parents, schools and the community, and helping them access services. It will also work with universities and community organisations to hold workshops for parents, involving professionals with expertise in a range of specialist areas including managing complex and challenging behaviours.

Autism hub staff will work with autism coaches and other staff in each education region to coordinate specialist support and advice. This support includes providing online and face-to-face professional programs for teachers and parents. The centre will inspire, encourage and teach young Queenslanders to read, including developing strategies for students who have reading difficulties such as dyslexia. Today Minister Jones and I had the opportunity to meet staff, students and parents at the new centre. It was a magical moment to be able to see firsthand the benefits that this centre will have not just for these kids and their parents but also for thousands of families in the years to come.

The new Autism Hub and Reading Centre is part of my government's Advancing Education action plan for education in Queensland. This government is committed to address potential barriers to learning to ensure students develop as positive and confident learners in a safe, supportive and connected environment. The centre helps parents, teachers, staff and, above all, our kids. I congratulate the education minister on driving this very important reform to Australian education and the hub's director, Chris Lassig.