




Speech By
Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk

MEMBER FOR INALA

Record of Proceedings, 12 October 2016

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Premier's Reading Challenge

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (2.09 pm): I would like to take this opportunity to talk about the success of this year's Premier's Reading Challenge. For 11 years now successive state governments have supported the reading challenge. This statewide initiative is open to state and non-state school students and home educated students up to year 9, as well as children aged up to five years enrolled in an early childhood centre, and individual home readers. It aims to improve literacy and encourage children to engage in reading for pleasure and learning.

This year I am pleased to report more than 114,000 Queensland students completed this challenge. These Queensland students and children read or experienced a total of 2.24 million books during the three-month overall reading period, breaking last year's record of 1.95 million books read. That is a great achievement by our students. I know the Minister for Education is particularly pleased with that great result.

This year's figure brings the total number of books read over the 11-year life of the challenge to more than 12 million. I am pleased to report that more than 1,300 schools and early childhood centres across Queensland took part this year. This figure includes 900 schools and 414 early childhood centres. To reward and recognise the students and children who completed the challenge, I am issuing signed certificates of achievement which will be presented during recognition ceremonies held at schools and childcare centres in November. My government will also recognise and reward more than 160,000 Queensland students who registered for the challenge with a certificate of participation.

The challenge is not a competition. The ultimate goal is to encourage participation and open children's minds to the pleasure of reading. I am sure everyone in the chamber today welcomes the news that more and more Queensland children are signing up to this important initiative. The Premier's Reading Challenge is ultimately ensuring more Queensland children are broadening their minds through literature. It is rewarding to see so many children demonstrating their love of books and reading through the challenge.

I thank sincerely the Premier's Reading Challenge sponsors for supporting this important initiative. These sponsors include Teachers' Union Health, QSuper, QT Mutual Bank, the *Courier-Mail*, Booktopia and the Queensland Ballet.