




Speech By  
**Bruce Saunders**

**MEMBER FOR MARYBOROUGH**

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

 **Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (12.01 pm): I rise today to talk about the Auditor-General's report titled *Maintenance of public schools*. I would also like to thank the secretariat and the members opposite and also the members from my side, the good side of the House, on the committee.

Congratulations go to the education minister because we are rolling out a huge maintenance program to 1,236 state schools providing quality learning and teaching spaces. The member for Broadwater got up and said that the greatest gift we can give a child is education. I do not see it as a gift; I see it as a right that we give everyone an education. It is not a gift. It is not like giving someone a scarf or a pair of sunglasses. It is about giving them a passage through life. That is what education does; it sets people up for life.

One of the things we can do is make sure that when the youth of our state go to school they go to schools that are up to standard—the air conditioning is working, the stairs are in good order et cetera. When we look at how many classrooms we have in Queensland—over 32,000 classrooms—that is thousands and thousands of dollars put into the local community. I hear bells—is there anyone in pyjamas?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Crawford): I did not hear any bells, member for Maryborough. That might have just been in your ears.

**Mr SAUNDERS:** When we talk about maintenance for schools, I would personally like to thank the education minister. Maryborough State High school is one of the oldest schools in Queensland. It used to be called Maryborough Grammar School. One of the great Labor premiers 'Red Ted' Theodore taught there. As a young child, I had a photo of 'Red Ted' Theodore hanging up in our house because he was an icon out west where I come from—and what a great man he was. Under the former government, the school had a lot of problems. Thanks to the minister, the member for Ashgrove—it is really good to say that now—we got the drainage problems fixed. This school was built in the late 1800s and it is very important that we maintain it.

With the extra spending on school maintenance, we were able to make sure that that building will be there for many, many years to come and for many more students to come. It is part of the heritage of Maryborough. As I said, it is one of the oldest schools in Queensland. It has a great history. Not only did the great 'Red Ted' Theodore teach there; we have also had Olympians go through the school. We have also had people like Duncan Chapman, who was the first person to step foot on land at Gallipoli in the war, go through there. We have had some really great people go through that school. As the Palaszczuk government, we are going to maintain that school.

It is not only Maryborough State High School. With this increase in spending on school maintenance, we are doing maintenance at Bauple State School, Mungar State School and Granville State School. Granville State School was home to another great member for Maryborough Brendan Hansen, who was a councillor and a state and federal politician. It is great to see this government putting money back into schools.

As I said earlier—and I will continue to say it—without education we are not putting children on the right path for life. Education breaks down all barriers. It puts people on the right path and gives career choice. They can go for jobs. It lifts the standard of living right across the community. That is what we have to do as a government. Not only the government but all politicians in the House have to make sure that we are setting our youths up for the future.

We are investing a lot of money in school maintenance. I noticed in the last few school holidays tradesmen working on the schools in my electorate. When I was driving around I saw tradesmen at different schools making sure that our schools were up to standard. That comes back to the education minister. I thank her on behalf of the constituents of Maryborough. We have a minister now who is absolutely looking after the youth of our state and who is really passionate about education. We cannot ask for much more than that.