




Speech By
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EDUCATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (3.49 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Education and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. This is yet another great Labor educational reform. However, I note the bipartisan support for the legislation. I pick up the last speaker's note about needing to improve education. Of course, we do need to improve, but let us reflect on some of those other great reforms. They are the fact that we have prep in the first place and the fact that we now have year 7 in high school. Students I have known for many years whom I have seen move into high school in year 7 in the last few years have absolutely blossomed. I have had nothing but positive feedback from families about that change. We see the standards increasing.

Let us talk about the future. The Advancing Education plan is a magnificent step forward. I recently took many of the P&Cs and P&Fs in my area down to the Autism Hub and the Reading Centre—great facilities. They are great initiatives providing great support for families who have children on the autism spectrum and providing great support for students no matter what their reading level, as well as for teachers and parents. I think about the coding and robotics aspects of that plan. I do not have to think too hard. I can go out and visit many of the schools that are already well advanced in this area, schools like Mount Gravatt State School, which recently received Entrepreneurs of Tomorrow funding. It is a great program. They are working with prep right through to grade 6 in the coding and robotics space—amazing.

I had the great pleasure earlier in the year of going to the Brisbane School of Distance Education Futures Academy night where we watched groups of students who had collaborated together to use robots to solve a common problem. They did not just use them; they designed them, they 3D printed them, they built prototypes and rebuilt them. That is impressive for any group of students, but these students were not just based here in Brisbane but based right around Australia and the world and they were doing this virtually—amazing outcomes, and that is where we have to go.

This bill, amongst many other things, focuses on the need to start education as early as we possibly can. We know that international research backs this. It is important that this is backed. We see yet another great achievement of the Palaszczuk government in this space. If I can divert for a minute, I wish to talk about the playgroup announcement—free membership for children under the age of 12 months. It provides great opportunities for families to get support and provides great opportunities for families to start that socialisation process early. That is a very important step in the ongoing educational process.

Prep is so important. I know that from personal experience. My children are a tad past the prep stage. It made such a difference to them. I saw both of my daughters blossom thanks to the dedicated Mr McGregor at Greenslopes State School. He is a fantastic teacher and an absolute institution at Greenslopes State School and has devoted his teaching career to the teaching of prep students.

Last week I had a great opportunity to visit all of the primary schools and also all of the childcare centres in my electorate for Book Week. I love Book Week. It is a fantastic week. You get to go out and visit many schools and read to many children. It was great to spend time with the librarians and the teachers and to watch them inspiring a love of reading in young people. It was really very special for me to go to Mount Gravatt East State School and read *Oliver's Grumbles* to the prep students. That book was illustrated by a local dad Giuseppe Poli. It is a great book that teaches kids how to deal with having a hard day. What was really special about that day was that when I was finished reading to those children, they wanted to get a sample of the writing that they had done and read it to me. It took me a long time to get out of there because they all wanted to have a turn. The teachers and librarians in that school and in all of the schools in my electorate have done a fantastic job of inspiring that love of reading.

I support this bill because it does something very important: it starts the education process early. We know from international research that the earlier we start education the better. The sooner we pass this bill the better. I commend the bill to the House.