




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) (11.51 am): I rise to speak to the report titled *Early childhood education: implementation of the recommendations in the Auditor-General's report 19: 2015-16*. At the outset I thank all of the staff who work in early childhood education centres around this great state as they do a fantastic job. Their centres represent the start of a child's education career. The staff in these centres set the standard and the way forward for the children in this state in terms of education. We all know that without education people go nowhere. The lifting of living standards right throughout the community comes through education, so those centres play a very important part in the introduction of children to education.

I also thank the director-general of Education and the crew that briefed the committee. It was a very good briefing. You learn a lot as you get older. My youngest child is now approaching 30, so—

Mr Butcher: You're old!

Mr SAUNDERS: I take that interjection: I feel old some days. You do lose touch a bit. I thank the department heads and the staff of the department who gave us a very good briefing to ensure we were across the issues.

The building blocks of education include early childhood education. The federal budget cut \$300 million from schools and education in Queensland. You have to shake your head in disbelief at that, because education is where it starts for future industry leaders, doctors, politicians and others in this great state.

We in Queensland are fortunate to have a very good education minister, the member for Ashgrove. I take this opportunity to thank her for the great work she is doing for Queensland schools. When I visit schools and talk to teachers—I know quite a few teachers—I hear that they are very happy with how the Palaszczuk government is going. The education minister is making education a priority and is getting the funding. That is as it should be.

The report shows that since 2010 an additional 148 kindergarten services have been established across Queensland. In 2016, funding from the Disability Inclusion Support for Queensland Kindergartens program supported 733 children with a disability to be included in kindergarten programs. That is fantastic. We are giving children with disabilities a chance to kick in to education at the very start.

This great report highlights the many good things being done by the education department. For example, in 2016 a remote kindergarten pilot was commenced in 11 state schools across the state. That was expanded in 2017, with 36 schools now participating and approximately 100 children involved. That gives the children who live in remote areas a chance in education. Those who live in remote areas of Queensland—I grew up in remote Queensland—know that education should be spread right across the state. I am very proud to be part of the Palaszczuk government that is delivering that, with a great

education minister. No matter where people in Queensland live, under this government everyone has a chance to be educated. I am very proud to say that I am part of a government that is looking after the children.

I commend the report to the House. Once again, I thank all educators across this state for making sure our children start off on the right path.