




Speech By  
**Andrew Powell**

**MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE**

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Record of Proceedings, 6 March 2018

### **EDUCATION (OVERSEAS STUDENTS) BILL**

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (3.52 pm): Mr Deputy Speaker, I congratulate you on your appointment to the position of Deputy Speaker. It is great to see you taking it in your stride and delivering extremely well already. I rise to briefly address the Education (Overseas Students) Bill 2018. As speakers before me have mentioned, a large component of the bill focuses on overseas students and the ability for them to operate in schools across Queensland. I want to focus on another aspect of the bill, one that is of interest and was spoken of at length by the member for Surfers Paradise, which was the introduction of the new senior assessment and tertiary entrance systems. I note that the committee's report states that in 2016 the Queensland government committed to introduce a new senior assessment and tertiary entrance, or SATE, system for students entering year 11 in 2019. This government may have agreed to introduce it in 2016, but the previous LNP government agreed to do so two years prior.

I refer to a media statement from 29 December 2014, when the then minister for education, training and employment, the honourable John-Paul Langbroek, said—

Students in Queensland will benefit from new assessment and tertiary education systems under proposals unveiled by the Newman LNP Government today.

...

The OP system has served Queensland well since its introduction in 1992, but it is becoming less relevant as education evolves.

I commenced my high schooling whilst living in Sydney. For many years I was facing the likelihood of having to complete the HSC. Even at the school I was at, the equivalent of Brisbane State High, many students looked forward to it with a sense of dread and foreboding. There was a lot of concern around that form of senior assessment and tertiary entrance system. It was highly competitive and came down to how well a student performed in those final exams. When we moved to Queensland in the fourth term of my grade 10 it was quite a different system that I was moving to. Back then it was the TE score. I was one of the last students to receive a TE score. The concept that you actually looked at the performance of your schooling over the course of two years was certainly far more sensible than what I was seeing during my time in New South Wales. Like all good things it served a purpose and it needed to be reviewed and it was not long after I finished my schooling that the OP score came in. My wife Taryn was one of the first students to receive an OP.

That was back in 1992. It was said at the time that Labor would review it after 10 years. It was not until an LNP government came to power in 2012 that that review actually took place. That was 20 years after the OP system was implemented. We commissioned an independent review of the Queensland system by the Australian Council for Educational Research. It included extensive consultation with teachers, universities, parent associations and, believe it or not, unions. The Australian Council for Educational Research made 23 recommendations.

In December 2014 the LNP government, led by the education minister at the time, John-Paul Langbroek, the member for Surfers Paradise, released our response. In that we supported the key recommendation in the review which included moving away from the overall position tertiary entrance

rank and the Queensland Core Skills test. Instead there would be three school based assessments plus one external assessment for each senior subject. My experience dictates that that was probably the best way to go. It was a blending of what was good about the New South Wales HSC with what was good about the Queensland system of continual assessment over those two years.

Again I point out that this was back in December of 2014. We read in the committee report and the explanatory notes of this bill that somehow the government stumbled upon this in 2016. As the Leader of the Opposition pointed out, delay after delay after delay has led to a level of uncertainty for a number of students and certainly for teachers and administrators in our schools. A number of students, principals and teachers who were expecting to be going through this new SATE system are not. Finally we are getting to this significant change.

I do agree with the member for Nanango and others who have spoken that this will be a significant and positive change for our senior students and for tertiary entrance. As others have said, it allows those who do want to pursue tertiary opportunities straight out of high school, as myself and a number of others have done, to transfer through jurisdictions far more easily than currently, but it also allows opportunities for students who do not necessarily want to pursue tertiary opportunities straight off the back of high school. I think of my own eldest son who, having completed a certificate in construction at the Technical Trade Training Centre at Caloundra, has picked up an apprenticeship and is now six months into his apprenticeship as a chippie. This system will allow opportunities for all students. I applaud the change, albeit coming a little bit late.

I want to take a brief moment to mention education as it relates to my electorate of Glass House. I particularly pay credit to the education department for coming to the assistance of Montville State School following a rather hairy storm on Friday, 16 February. It was like a mini tornado that literally ripped through the top of Montville on the Blackall Range. There were trees down across the entire school. There was a serious concern held by the new principal that we were going to be unable to open the school on Monday. Everyone pitched in. On Sunday the education department was there with chainsaws and chippers and put in a sterling effort to get the school ready to open on Monday morning. It was great for me to be there on the Friday of that week to attend the school leadership ceremony and to help badge the new leaders of that great school.

I acknowledge that, unfortunately, due to the redistribution, the electorate of Glass House has lost a number of fantastic schools. However, through the hard work of some of us on this side of the chamber, fortunately those schools have picked up some equally good local members to represent them. I have reluctantly accepted that I have had to hand over Palmwoods State School and Chevallum State School to the new member for Nicklin, Marty Hunt. I know he will do a great job working with the principals, teachers and students of those fantastic schools.

In the south of the electorate unfortunately I have lost the Caboolture Montessori School, which was one of my little gems. It is one of those pocket rocket schools that you really do not know too much about until you get involved in them. They do a fantastic job under principal Yvonne Rinaldi. I also acknowledge the Australian Christian College Moreton, where my eldest daughter is enrolled, and the new Pumicestone State School, which was built by the LNP when in government, on Pumicestone Road in Caboolture North. Unfortunately, all three of those schools have left the electorate of Glass House, but they have been picked up by the new member for Pumicestone, Simone Wilson. I am very grateful that they too will be represented by a stellar local member.

In the short time remaining, like others I want to reflect on the fact that, hidden in this bill, are more changes to the Trading (Allowable Hours) Act to allow Easter trading across the state. Easter has only been around for 2,000 years. It is not like it suddenly pops up as a surprise and that the government cannot see it coming. It is not as if it pops up out of the blue. Sure, getting your head around the cycles of the moon to keep an eye on the shifting date, which may fall somewhere between the end of March and the end of April, might be challenging, but you can literally Google the date for Easter out to the 3000s.

There is no excuse that, for three years running, the House has had to make adjustments to the trading hours act because those opposite cannot make the right amendments to the act in the first place to allow businesses to trade across the state, particularly in rural and regional Queensland and also, I understand, in Oxley in the seat of Mount Ommaney. That should have been sorted out far in advance. We give our support to sorting this out. The last thing we want to see is businesses do the wrong thing at Easter. However, it is simply not good enough that, in this day and age, they cannot get it right in the first place.