




Speech By  
**Corrine McMillan**

**MEMBER FOR MANSFIELD**

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**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL; REVENUE  
LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL; BETTING TAX BILL**

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (1.11 am): I am very proud to rise today to speak in support of the Appropriation Bill delivered by the honourable Treasurer and member for South Brisbane. What a great budget it is for Queensland and for the Mansfield electorate. This great Labor budget responds to the needs of all Queenslanders, creating jobs, setting out a clear economic plan, attracting investment and building infrastructure—building the economy for our future. It is a budget that delivers the health and education infrastructure that Labor knows is an essential investment for the future success of young Queenslanders and for the prosperity of our great state.

When I was elected to this parliament I vowed that I would strive to ensure that the Mansfield electorate became a hub of educational excellence. I am proud of the 19 schools in my electorate and the quality education that they provide. The reason young families flock to my electorate is that good-quality education. I know that a hub of educational excellence requires the infrastructure for learning; the resources and funding to support learning as well as the collegial and collaborative support of educators working together across schools and between classrooms; effective teachers and strong educational leaders who apply explicit and precise strategies to improve student learning. A quality education transforms the lives of individuals, families and whole communities. We are delivering a great start for our children.

That is why I am so delighted that this budget provides more than \$20 million for the construction, upgrade and maintenance in government schools located within my electorate of Mansfield. At Mansfield State High School a new two-storey science building is already under construction at a cost of \$8 million. A new three-storey learning centre with additional classrooms will be delivered next year at a cost of \$9.7 million, not to mention \$6.1 million for a new hall.

At Rochedale State High School \$4 million will be spent under the '2020 Ready' program on a new two-storey, 10-classroom learning centre. The Palaszczuk government is proud to be delivering the infrastructure needed to provide Mansfield and Rochedale State High School students with a world-class education.

Mansfield State School will benefit from \$880,000 over the next two years to extend their hall. This will ensure that the school can cater for increased student enrolments. Eight new learning areas will be built at Mackenzie State Special School, two teaching blocks at Upper Mount Gravatt State School will be refurbished at a cost of \$250,000, and there will be a further \$772,000 allocated for minor works and maintenance across nine different schools.

Today we heard the plans of those opposite: air-conditioned schools to improve NAPLAN results. Having spent time at the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, the OECD, in France, amongst many other leadership experiences, I had never read of a correlation between air

conditioning and improved NAPLAN results or increased student performance. Not even well-respected educational theorist John Hattie, who has synthesised more than 500,000-plus studies related to student achievement, identifies air conditioning as a lever to improve student learning.

Our Queensland education community should be very concerned if this is all the opposition can offer our children in the critical area of education. Yet again Queensland witnesses those opposite respond to complex matters with punitive measures. Who could forget what happened during the Newman government years? I experienced firsthand their key education platform. Nyanda State High School was closed and leased to the private education sector. The Brisbane School of Distance Education was sold to developers. The Fortitude Valley State School was for sale. They wanted to sell the oval at Whites Hill State College for housing development. Who can forget the abhorrent closure of the Barrett Adolescent Centre for Mental Health?

The Newman government platform and vision for education in Queensland was sacking teachers, teacher aides and selling assets. There was a litany of uninformed business decisions with no knowledge of the education system and school administration made by those opposite that inevitably affected the lives and futures of our young Queenslanders and their families.

We can see from this how those on the other side of the House see education. They see it as a business. Is their model of the welfare state independent public hospitals, independent public highways and perhaps to rate these using tempting targets, performance criteria and then to de-privatise this data to name and shame vulnerable communities while celebrating some heroic resultant fiscal balance?

The Palaszczuk government has a clear vision for education in Queensland. Education is not debt. It is the best investment that we can make for the future of Queenslanders and for the future prosperity of our great state. A quality education is a right. It is a right of all Queenslanders regardless of their location, socio-economic status, gender or race. Our children deserve the very best.

In addition to investing in school infrastructure, under the leadership of Minister Grace, not surprisingly, our plans include a commitment to the early years; the teaching of STEM, digital technologies, robotics, coding and artificial intelligence; developing students' global mindset and communication across languages; preparing for a new senior assessment and tertiary entrance system; and investing in teacher effectiveness and building the capability of school leaders. Nowhere do we mention air conditioning to improve student learning in our state.

What do the Leader of the Opposition and shadow minister for education have for us now? Only seven teaching days occur in January. That is hardly a justification for a \$2 billion spend on air conditioning. Appallingly, Queenslanders read about back to basics in the *Courier-Mail* on Friday, 8 June and we heard about it again today. Many theorists would see the back to basics policy position as an attempt to deny public school students opportunities to learn how to think critically and creatively—an attempt to return our education system to an industrialised bygone era.

We have the rollout of Independent Public Schools, with school councils made up of dentists, solicitors and business worthies who would all be experts in education because they went to school. This is from an opposition that every day continues to confuse independence with autonomy. One does not have to look far to determine that education already operates within a decentralised environment in Queensland and teachers and school leaders are granted extensive autonomy. However, we must remember that opting for decentralised decision-making often means greater responsibility, and centralisation of accountability regimes, such as standardised testing, is no guarantee of student improvement. The Independent Public Schools experiment has been largely a divisive exercise for our great public education system.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mrs D'ATH:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member has the right to be heard in silence. She is not taking the interjections and those on the other side are continually interjecting.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Whiting): Member for Southport, your interjections are not being taken.

**Ms McMILLAN:** As I said, the Independent Public Schools experiment has been largely a divisive exercise for our great public education system. I can give an example from the Mansfield electorate. When IPS was introduced, the then education minister made a commitment that no school would be included in the program against the wishes of the staff, but the take-up rate for IPS was initially very poor. Lo and behold, the minister and the former member for Mansfield turned up at a large state high school in my electorate and pressured the principal to nominate, even though the staff were vehemently against it. The school was nominated and accepted into the program.

Soon after, the then principal moved to the private sector chasing greater collegiality, more pay and better packaged conditions. The principal departed but the school where the staff had opposed the program were left to negotiate this IPS journey without a strong commitment to it and with a new principal. Principals are important to schools and education, but a principal without the support of the staff will not succeed. There is a difference between autonomy and autocracy, but those opposite do not seem to understand this, let alone understand the complexity of school leadership.

One of the areas where IPS has had a devastating impact is the teacher transfer system and in the relocation of teachers and administrators. The introduction of IPS has seen the breakdown of the transfer and relocation processes across Queensland, and those opposite cannot even see that this is affecting students in the regional, rural and remote electorates they claim to represent. They are willing to sell out the students and parents in their own electorates for their ideological pursuit of independent public schools—whatever that means.

Supporting our regions is a key priority for our Palaszczuk government. On this side, we support the autonomy of teachers, school leadership and the autonomy for school communities, but not at the expense of leaving some schools and some students behind. The four years of the IPS program have finished. The government will analyse current international research, what worked and what did not work across the diverse schools in Queensland, as any sound, responsible organisation should. The Palaszczuk government is committed to a public education system where every child gets the best opportunity.

It is particularly pleasing to see a strong commitment by the Palaszczuk government to the TAFE sector. This vitally important part of our national training industry has had the heart ripped out of it by successive conservative governments over many years. How gratifying it is to see a real commitment by this state government to the TAFE sector, with \$80 million being injected across our state. Under the Newman government, student numbers dropped by thousands at my local Mount Gravatt TAFE. Under the Palaszczuk government, the Mount Gravatt TAFE school of fashion is set to become the only school of fashion excellence in Queensland, with an injection of \$1.5 million to upgrade teaching spaces and provide state-of-the-art equipment. In addition, the TAFE corporate office will relocate to the Mount Gravatt campus, ensuring there is a long-term vision for this very important educational institution located in my electorate.

Commuters will benefit from an additional 200 parking spaces at the Eight Mile Plains park-and-ride, and motorists can expect smoother travel with a \$10.7 million upgrade of the Pacific Motorway from Eight Mile Plains to the Logan Motorway, not to mention the Cross River Rail important infrastructure, which will reduce south side congestion. Since the 2015 election, the Palaszczuk government has improved front-line health and education services in Brisbane by employing an additional 1,374 nurses, 395 doctors, 981 teachers and 248 teacher aides.

Finally, allow me to provide the Leader of the Opposition with a free lesson in leadership. It is one aspect of leadership to oppose the government, but a leader must also have a vision for the future, a vision for Queensland. After all the schools in Queensland have air conditioners, all the schools are independent public schools and all the children and teachers return to the basics, then what? What will our students learn? How will the Leader of the Opposition prepare our children for their futures? What will the infrastructure essential for learning look like? The member for Pumicestone is the only member of those opposite who can cast some intelligence and speak with some experience on these issues. The education community of Queensland is watching closely, because they know, you know.

I am proud to be part of a Queensland Labor government led by our Premier and Deputy Premier who have a vision for this great state of Queensland. The 2018-19 state budget ensures a progressive Queensland that will be one that is more educated, more critical, healthier, more mobile and better prepared for the challenges that lie ahead. This will be the work of one government, a Labor government, and the result of only one party—that is, the Australian Labor Party. I congratulate the Deputy Premier and Premier for their work and I commend this bill to the House.