




Speech By
Deb Frecklington

MEMBER FOR NANANGO

Record of Proceedings, 4 September 2018

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

NAPLAN; Independent Public Schools

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.00 pm): No issue is more important to my team than the education of Queensland kids. We want our kids to learn the foundation skills they need to get a job and succeed in life. The latest NAPLAN results showed that Queensland kids are continuing to fall behind, particularly when it comes to writing. Queensland, unfortunately, has gone backwards in the last 12 months in terms of years 3, 5, 7 and 9 standards.

We would expect those opposite to take some responsibility and show how the government planned to turn these poor results around. Instead, the education minister blamed the test. Passing the buck simply will not improve our education standards, but meeting the challenge head-on will. That is why the LNP has already announced our plan to improve education and deliver better support for our teachers. I acknowledge the work of the shadow education minister, Jarrod Bleijie.

At the core of the LNP's plan is the expansion of the Independent Public Schools program to ensure our schools are run by local principals, local teachers and, most importantly, local parents. The NAPLAN results show the LNP's Independent Public Schools work. Independent Public Schools do get better results. Independent Public Schools placed high up the rankings across years 3, 5, 7 and 9. Independent Public Schools work because local principals, teachers and parents are all given more control on how they run their schools. There is a lesson to be learnt here.

The LNP wants our kids to be the smartest in the nation, which is why the LNP believes in the Independent Public Schools program and that is why the LNP will continue with the program and expand it. We will get behind it and we will work with the teachers, the parents and the community members who do so much to improve the education of our children. It is disappointing that the Teachers' Union wants this program scrapped. The union wants the program scrapped because Independent Public Schools are run by parents, teachers and principals and not a head office based right here in central Brisbane.

Mr Costigan: They don't like it.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I will take that interjection—because they do not like it. Where is Labor's secret report into Independent Public Schools? That is right. Under the Palaszczuk Labor government, it is secret and hidden. That is exactly where the report into Independent Public Schools is—under lock and key, in some black hole in the Palaszczuk government. If it ever does see the light of day, it will be blacked out. They would have got the pen and they would have run it through—

Mr Janetzki: They love redactions.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Yes, redactions. They will be taking it right through, because anything positive—and there will be positives in the report into Independent Public Schools—will be wiped out because the Labor government do not want to show it to the parents, teachers and community members

who work so hard to deliver good education for their children in those communities. The Labor government refuse to see what is in front of them—that is, a program that works. Why do they want to get rid of it? Because it was an LNP program; that is why.

Mr McArdle: And it worked.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Yes, it worked. I will take that interjection from the member for Caloundra. This is a program that worked and that is why the LNP is going to get behind it and continue it. It is coming up to four weeks now since the education minister said she would release the report on Independent Public Schools after she had been briefed.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Whiting): Order! Members, please cease the conversation across the chamber.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: The noise that we are hearing from those opposite is because they know that the Independent Public Schools is a good thing and they know that the Labor education minister was briefed on this four weeks ago. The education minister said four weeks ago that she would release the Independent Public Schools review after she had been briefed.

An opposition member: Now she has gone to ground.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Where is the education minister in relation to this? I take that interjection: she has gone to ground because the education minister knows that this is an LNP program that works.

If the education minister, the Premier and those opposite have nothing to hide in relation to this report, why is it locked up under lock and key? If they have nothing to hide, they should release the report today. I call on the Premier or the Deputy Premier or the Teachers' Union or the education minister, or whoever it is who is running the show over there today, to release the report because it is obvious that the education minister, the Premier and the Deputy Premier failed the test when it comes to transparency. They have failed that test. The delay in releasing this review is just another example. There is no greater example than the cover-ups, secrecy and protection rackets under the Labor government. That is except for the estimates, because estimates was the No. 1 protection racket.

I would like to outline some of the practical measures in the LNP's plan to support Queensland teachers and improve student outcomes. We want to declutter the curriculum and we need to get back to basics. We want a stronger focus on the core principles of reading, writing and numeracy. As a mum of three daughters, I know it makes sense. That is what the teachers want; they want the system decluttered. The parents want the kids to get back to the basics. I want my daughters to be a part of the smartest kids in the nation. Under this Labor government, what chance do they have? We need to encourage our children to have a greater focus on the skills of reading, writing and numeracy.

Unlike the Labor Party, we have members who understand the bush. We understand how hot it gets in some of these schools, and that is why the LNP have a plan to air-condition each and every state school classroom across Queensland. We want our children to learn in comfortable places and we want our teachers to teach in comfortable environments because we know that cool kids are smart kids.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I will take the interjection from the shadow education minister. Those ministers opposite would never give up their air-conditioned offices, so why do they expect—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Whiting): Order, members. There is far too much conversation and noise. I am struggling to hear the Leader of the Opposition.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Those opposite are so out of touch with what parents, community members and teachers are saying about our schools. They simply do not get it.

Most importantly, the LNP has also announced that English will be a mandatory subject under the new ATAR system. I have a daughter who is in year 10 and is choosing her subjects. I can tell honourable members that she will be doing English. If we want our Queensland kids to be the smartest in the nation we need to teach them English and we need to give them the best start in life. Whether they want to go into the sciences or the languages at universities or whether they want to do humanities, they need English. That is common sense. That is what the teachers tell us, that is what the community members tell us and, most importantly, that is what the parents of Queensland tell us. Under the LNP we will bring back the best education system in Australia.

(Time expired)