




Speech By
Hon. Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR MCCONNEL

Record of Proceedings, 16 October 2018

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Young Workers Hub; Cyberbullying

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations) (9.53 am): Many young students have casual and part-time jobs while they are still at school. Every parent wants to ensure that their child is not exploited and is safe and healthy in their workplace when they are working all kinds of hours during the week.

I note that there have been media reports this morning about the Young Workers Hub, which has developed a program to help inform students about their rights at work. I understand that these materials are publicly available on its website. For the benefit of the House and the people of Queensland, let me make this very clear: no formal proposal has been provided to the Department of Education or to me from the Young Workers Hub. Again, this program has not been endorsed by the department or by me as Minister for Education.

As I said at estimates and in the media, there is no place for union recruitment of students on school grounds. However, it is important to note that there is broad support from the community for young people to understand their rights at work, in line with the Australian Curriculum. Almost every week the education department and my office receive correspondence from outside organisations, and indeed members from both sides of this House, seeking support for their services or initiatives to be run in Queensland state schools. All are handled in a professional manner.

Another issue which we know is important to parents and young people is cyberbullying. The Palaszczuk government is leading the way in tackling the scourge of cyberbullying. Yesterday I was honoured to join the Premier at the Queensland Anti-Cyberbullying Taskforce luncheon. It was the culmination of nine months of hard work by the task force to unpack the insidious community-wide issue.

The Premier announced \$3.5 million for a range of initiatives to tackle cyberbullying, in response to the findings of the task force. Around half of the 29 recommendations relate to schools and supporting students. Of course, my department will implement all relevant recommendations and will work with non-state schools to do the same.

As the chair of the task force, Madonna King, said yesterday, we must continue the conversation with parents and students. I am committed to keeping the lines of communication open. That is why I am pleased to report that last week I had the pleasure of meeting with my Ministerial Student Advisory Council for a second time. We spoke about cyberbullying and mental health issues. This advisory council is made up of 16 students from state and non-state schools across Queensland. I sincerely thank the students for their valuable input and look forward to the next meeting of the Ministerial Student Advisory Council in 2019.