




Speech By
Jarrold Bleijie

MEMBER FOR KAWANA

Record of Proceedings, 22 August 2018

MOTION

Independent Public Schools, Order for Production of Documents

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (5.00 pm): I move—

This House:

1. notes:

- (a) the benefits of Independent Public Schools in Queensland, including:
 - (i) giving state schools greater autonomy in decision-making, cutting red tape and removing layers of management to improve outcomes for students;
 - (ii) forging strong community and industry partnerships and using staffing flexibility to meet student needs and improve student outcomes; and
 - (iii) providing parents greater choice when it comes to the education of their children;
- (b) the minister met with the Queensland Teachers' Union on 24 January 2018;
- (c) the Queensland Teachers' Union wrote to the Minister for Education on 29 January 2018 calling for the termination of Independent Public Schools;
- (d) a secret review into Independent Public Schools commenced shortly after the minister received the letter from the Queensland Teachers' Union;
- (e) the minister publicly committed on 8 August 2018 to release the secret report after she was briefed that day;
- (f) the minister has failed to release the report after she was briefed some two weeks ago; and

2. pursuant to standing order 27, orders the minister to immediately produce and table the secret review into Independent Public Schools.

No-one cares more for the education of our students in Queensland than the Liberal National Party. The Liberal National Party funded a record investment in our education system between 2012 and 2015. We put more money into maintaining our schools than the Labor Party ever did. We put more resources into our schools than the Labor Party ever did. We gave autonomy to our schools. We said to the principals, the teachers, the students and the parents, 'You run the school for the benefit of the students and the community.' We looked the union in the eye and said, 'We will not implement policies that will be detrimental to students and education.'

Of course, after a short period of a few years under the Labor government, we have seen education being taken over by the Queensland Teachers' Union. I was worried when the member for McConnell was appointed the Minister for Industrial Relations. Putting the former QCU state secretary in charge of Industrial Relations is like putting the fox in charge of the henhouse. What is more concerning is we have the former state secretary of the QCU as the education minister of the state of Queensland.

When we started receiving a few concerning phone calls from proud principals of schools saying they had heard rumours that the independent public school model was on the chopping board, we knew that something was up. We knew the deal had been done, because nothing had been announced about the review into independent public schools. This is how the Labor Party operates in Queensland. The union meets the minister, the union writes to the minister and then the minister does—

Mr Minnikin interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE:—or they email—I take the interjection—to private email accounts and then the ministers do the union’s bidding. That is exactly what happened here. I table documents relating to an RTI application with respect to the Queensland Teachers’ Union.

Tabled paper: Bundle of documents from a right to information application regarding the Queensland Teachers’ Union [\[1177\]](#).

Interestingly, I had a Twitter debate with the Queensland Teachers’ Union before this secret review was public knowledge. They said, ‘No, no, we’re not wanting to get rid of independent public schools; we’re wanting to take the good parts of it and ditch the rest.’ That is what they tweeted. What they did not disclose is that they had written to the education minister on 24 January 2018 calling for the complete abolition of the independent public schools model—not taking the good parts or getting rid of the bad parts; it was a complete termination of independent public schools. The minister met with them on the 24th and then they wrote three days later—I correct the record. Now we have found out that taxpayers are paying \$60,000 for a secret review into independent public schools. On 8 August when the journalist asked, ‘When will you release the report?’, the minister said—

Mr Minnikin: Not this interview?

Mr BLEIJIE: No, not the interview that she walked off from. That was in relation to the Queensland Council of Unions and teaching kids about activism and recruitment for unions. That was another interview. That was another bungle. It was not the 200 amendments that she had to make to the racing bill—more pages of amendments than pages in the actual bill; it was not that one, either. This was another bungle. It was on 8 August when the minister said, ‘I have a briefing today ... As soon as I get briefed and we know exactly what is in the report we will release it to the public. We will not make it secret. There is nothing to hide here. I am more than happy to release it following the briefing today.’ That was two weeks ago. Where is the report? Where is the secret report into the independent public schools? The motion calls on her to table it.

I want to thank the independent public schools in my electorate: Buddina State School, Currimundi State School, Kawana Waters State College, Meridan State College and Talara Primary College. When a few of the schools were made independent public schools we had the other schools knocking on our door wanting to become independent schools. That is how much the schools appreciate it. We know why the unions do not like it: it takes away the union’s power. We on this side of the House believe that the best form of education a student can get is when the teachers, the parents and the community are in charge of the education in the schools, not the Queensland Teachers’ Union or the Labor Party.