




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR IPSWICH

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ADJOURNMENT

Reconciliation in Queensland Schools Program

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (6.15 pm): I would like to raise awareness today of the Reconciliation in Queensland Schools program, which is helping to create a legacy of reconciliation in our Queensland schools. I recently attended the celebration of a completed reconciliation project at Raceview State School. The completion of this project was celebrated by members of the Raceview State School community and members of our local Indigenous community including the family of the late Les Davidson.

Reconciliation is an act of coming together to build respect and trust between Indigenous and Australian communities. Raceview State School's reconciliation project clearly showed that we are on our way to reaching that goal. I wish to congratulate Raceview State School on this wonderful achievement, and I would like to personally thank the family of Les Davidson—Tracey Evans, Molly Evans, and Uncle Errol. I also wish to thank the Principal of Raceview State School, Theresa Sheehan, and the Deputy Principal, Francine Hayler, for inviting me to their celebration.

The completed project was a tremendous example of school students and local Indigenous elders working together to strengthen reconciliation in our community and build respectful and lasting relationships. The project featured a stunning mural of the late Les Davidson, an important member of the Ipswich community who played a large role in establishing welfare services to Aboriginal people in Ipswich such as affordable housing and health. I would like to personally thank his granddaughter, Tracey Evans, for taking the time to tell her grandfather's story about the important legacy he left for Ipswich.

Les Davidson was a remarkable figure. He was the first Aboriginal person in Ipswich to become a qualified tradesman. He helped secure the Aboriginal Cemetery Reserve at Deebing Creek. He helped to secure federal funding to purchase nine houses for families in need, and he co-founded the first Aboriginal medical service in Queensland, now known as Kambu, which still operates to this day in Ipswich. Les was an inspiration to our community and it was a joy to see his legacy memorialised in the mural at Raceview State School.

Raceview's reconciliation project also saw students and Indigenous elders work together to create a bush tucker garden which grows a variety of native berries, lemon myrtle and warrigal greens. Indigenous elders Anne and Gary Young from the Bush Garden Association volunteered much of their time and valuable knowledge to help the students establish this garden, and I wish to thank them also. All students and members of the Raceview school community can access the bush tucker garden, giving everyone the chance to experience and enjoy native bush tucker, as well as get involved in helping to maintain it for future students. The garden offers a wonderful opportunity for students to grow their own food and to have instilled in them a sense of responsibility.

Raceview State School is proud of its achievement in creating the reconciliation mural and bush tucker garden, and I commend its efforts in playing an active role in helping to advance reconciliation in the Ipswich community. I wish to also thank the Office of the Commonwealth Games for delivering the Reconciliation in Queensland Schools initiative and providing Raceview State School the funding to make its project a possibility.