



Speech By  
**Christopher Whiting**


**MEMBER FOR BANCROFT**

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## ADJORNMENT

### Morrison Government, Education Funding

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (7.27 pm): Tonight I want to talk about a federal funding issue regarding schools. Queensland needs that federal funding for our schools. We need our fair share from the federal government, but in the last week the only thing of any substance from the federal government is that the minister has announced a \$1 million fund for schools to teach civic values—to teach students how to be politically engaged and about the democratic process. The crux is that we need fairer funding for schools. We need to meet needs based funding for our schools. We are \$1.9 billion worse off compared to the arrangements that were previously in place. That represents a true \$1.9 billion worth of cuts under the Morrison government, and those facing the most cuts are the ones most in need.

Under the Morrison government nine out of 10 public schools are still below the national resource standard. Let us compare that to what Labor has announced. It wants to advance more funding to put into early childhood to educate three-year-olds as well as four-year-olds so that they are ready for their school journey. Besides the fact that we need that funding to counter those cuts the federal government has made, we do not need values projects because values projects are already being taught at our schools. Over 20 years as an elected person in my community I have learnt a lot about values from my school communities, particularly from the state schools. I have learnt about tolerance and acceptance. I have learnt about embracing diversity from state high school students because they live these values side by side with many different people.

Some 25 per cent of the Deception Bay State High School is Samoan and it has not been easy creating a harmonious school there. Some have had to struggle to overcome prejudice and some have struggled to overcome the idea that it is easier to resort to violence, and these are things that they learnt from home. The point is that the federal government could learn something about political values from our state high school students. They have recently shown that they are ready to take collective action. They have shown that they want to directly address an outstanding public policy issue. They have shown that they are prepared to sacrifice something of themselves to make this better outcome, and they have shown that they are prepared to take action directed at a better outcome for the future.

I say to the federal education minister: we need our fair share of funding for schools. That is what we really need. My community does not need the federal Liberals coming around lecturing us about values, because I believe that our kids could teach them about values. We need them to fulfil the promise that was highlighted by the Gonski review all those years ago. We need fairer funding.