



Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MANSFIELD

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**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL; REVENUE
AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (3.24 pm): I am proud to rise today to speak in support of the Appropriation Bill delivered by the honourable Treasurer and member for South Brisbane. What a great budget it is for Queensland and the electorate of Mansfield. This great Labor budget responds to the needs of all Queenslanders—creating jobs, setting out a clear economic plan, attracting investment and building infrastructure, building the economy of the future despite the globally unstable political and economic environment. This budget delivers health and education infrastructure and investment for the future success of young Queenslanders and the prosperity of our great state.

Since 2015, 207,000 jobs have been created—evidence that Labor does not, and will not, cut, sack and sell. When I was elected to this parliament I vowed that I would strive to ensure the Mansfield electorate became a hub of educational excellence. I am proud of the 19 schools in my electorate and the quality education they provide. They are the reason more than 100 young families flock to my electorate every month. I know that a hub of educational excellence requires world-class infrastructure; the resources and funding to inspire learning; the collegial and collaborative support of educators working together across schools and between classrooms; effective teachers and strong educational leaders who apply explicit and precise timely strategies to improve student learning; and a team of educational leaders who I can support, mentor and guide from an experienced and informed position, despite those opposite referencing that members on this side of the House have never had a real job— an offensive and incorrect allusion. What better way to insult and further alienate 53,000 teachers right across Queensland whom the member for Townsville and I proudly represent.

A quality education transforms the lives of individuals, families and whole communities. We are delivering a great start for our children in Mansfield. That is why I am so delighted that this budget provides almost \$20 million for the construction, upgrade and maintenance of government schools located within my electorate of Mansfield. Building infrastructure creates jobs—in fact, 58 jobs on school sites in Mansfield alone—with 58 per cent of the workforce on large-scale government projects made up of apprentices and trainees. This includes close to \$11.7 million in 2019-20 for infrastructure projects aimed at renewing and expanding the great Mansfield State High School, one of the highest-performing schools in Queensland and deserved of first-class learning facilities. A new two-storey science building has been completed at a cost of \$7.7 million. A new \$10.4 million, three-storey learning centre with additional classrooms will open for the start of the 2020 school year, not to mention the \$6.1 million for the new hall, which opened in 2018, and, of course, the upcoming refurbishment of the old hall to create a performing arts precinct. To cater for continued growth and enrolments the budget also includes \$3.9 million to commence work on the \$5.5 million construction of additional new classrooms and a canteen at Wishart State School.

Mansfield State School is also receiving \$1.5 million in this budget for a \$7.7 million project to provide additional classrooms in this growing school community, not to mention the \$1.43 million to extend the hall allocated in last year's budget. At Rochedale State High School \$5 million will be spent

under the 2020 Ready program on a new two-storey, 10-classroom learning centre. There will be a further \$849,000 for maintenance and minor works across state schools in my electorate. This coming year the Palaszczuk government will spend more than \$1.464 billion on new and enhanced state schools right across Queensland.

Our Queensland communities should be very concerned if 'back to basics' is all the opposition can offer our children in this critical area of education. Many theorists would see the back to basics policy position as an attempt to deny public school students opportunities to learn how to think critically and creatively—an attempt to return our education system to an industrialised, bygone era.

Again, Queensland witnesses those opposite respond to complex matters with punitive measures. The Queensland education community will never forget what happened during the Newman government years. I experienced firsthand its key education platform: Nyanda State High School closed; the Brisbane School of Distance Education sold to developers; the Fortitude Valley State School for sale; they wanted to sell the oval at Whites Hill State College for housing development; and who can forget the abhorrent closure of the Barrett centre for adolescent mental health? The Newman government's platform and vision for education in Queensland was a litany of uninformed business decisions with no knowledge of the education system and school administration made by those opposite that inevitably affected the lives and futures of our young Queenslanders and their families.

We can see from this how those on the other side of the House see education. They see it as a business. Is their model of the welfare state to have independent public hospitals and independent public highways and perhaps to rank these using tempting targets and performance criteria and then to deprivatise this data to name and shame the most vulnerable communities across Queensland while celebrating some heroic resultant fiscal balance? The Palaszczuk government has a clear vision for education in Queensland. Education is the best investment that we can make for the future of Queenslanders and for the future prosperity of our great state. A quality education is a right of all Queenslanders regardless of their location, socioeconomic status, gender or race. Our children in Queensland deserve the very best.

It is also pleasing to see a strong commitment by the Palaszczuk government to the TAFE sector. This vitally important part of our national training industry has had the heart ripped out of it by successive conservative federal governments over many years. How gratifying it is to see a real commitment by this state government to the TAFE sector, with \$80 million being injected across the state. Of course, Labor made TAFE free for our year 12 graduates and this is valued immensely by the young people in my electorate. Under the Newman government, student numbers dropped by thousands at my local Mount Gravatt TAFE. Under the Palaszczuk government, the Mount Gravatt TAFE school of fashion is set to become the only school of fashion excellence in Queensland, with an injection of millions to upgrade teaching spaces and provide state-of-the-art equipment. We have committed an additional \$30 million over two years to support universal access for kindergarten in the year before school.

Turning to transport, commuters will benefit from an additional 367 parking spaces at the Eight Mile Plains park-and-ride, and motorists can expect smoother travel with a \$10.7 million upgrade of the Pacific Motorway from Eight Mile Plains to the Logan Motorway—not to mention the Cross River Rail and the cycle Veloway, which is important, long-term, job-creating infrastructure that will reduce congestion in my electorate.

We are keeping Queenslanders healthy. There is \$6.2 million to deliver upgrades to the QEII Hospital and deliver more doctors and nurses. Since the 2015 election, the Palaszczuk government has improved front-line health and education services in Brisbane by employing an additional 6,000 nurses, more than 2,000 doctors and 500 ambulance officers. Since March 2015, the Palaszczuk government has employed an additional 4,800 full-time equivalent teachers and around 1,400 teacher aides. This budget commits \$80 million over four years for a range of initiatives under the Shifting Minds suicide prevention flagship program.

Small businesses play an important role in my community. An \$885 million payroll tax relief package will assist small to medium sized businesses to create jobs in my electorate. The payroll tax threshold will increase from \$1.1 million to \$1.3 million. An additional 1,500 businesses will no longer pay any payroll tax. I am proud to stand as part of the Queensland Labor government, led by our Premier and Deputy Premier who have a vision for this great state of Queensland. The 2019-20 state budget ensures that a progressive Queensland will be one that is more educated, more critical, healthier, more mobile and better prepared for the challenges that lie ahead. This will be the work of one government, a Labor government, and the result of only one party, the Australian Labor Party. This is a jobs budget delivering great schools for Mansfield.