




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MANSFIELD

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

State Education Week

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (2.15 pm): I rise to acknowledge the honourable work of our teachers in Queensland during State Education Week. Like you, Mr Deputy Speaker, prior to my election, I had devoted my entire working life to education. Like all beginning teachers, we began our teaching careers with a head full of ideas and a heart full with passion.

In schools, as in leadership more broadly, there are some things that hold true across different school settings while others require a unique approach. In those whom I admire, I see familiar landmarks of courage, tenacity, integrity, passion, intelligence and a faith that anything is possible. Equally in leading and advocating for schools that reflect the diversity of our broader community, I have seen that the greatest teachers are those who adapt to serve those they represent; the nimble and progressive; those who embrace risk, grasp with an open mind and willing hands the excitement of trying something new, of seeking others' more experienced counsel, advice and feedback; and hardworking, well-prepared teachers who engage reflectively with their colleagues, parents, support workers and their students to do whatever it takes to witness the twinkle in a child's eye, their half smirk and their humble pride when they say, 'I get it.'

As any experienced teacher or school leader knows too well, the decisions made by politicians are felt at every level of the school community and, ultimately, can be strings to uplift us as teachers or strictures to disempower us. Being a teacher is not a preparation for political life because teachers know the value of education. That is something that most people in our community know. Rather, it is a preparation because, through a teacher's eyes, as you know, we get to see all of the factors outside of the school gate that impact upon families, that either help or hinder their child participate fully in education.

Public education is the pillar of our democracy. It is the only medium to progress greater equality for Queenslanders. It really is the great social equaliser. Our schools are the beating heart of our community, and the benefit of our teachers' work extends beyond their students to their families and our Queensland towns. The high expectations for learning established by our teachers every day, across every subject and in every town set the challenges that nurture hope, resilience and inspire confidence in our young people.

From St Peter's in the far south of my electorate to Seton Catholic College in the north to Sinai College in the east and Upper Mount Gravatt State School in the west, and all of the teachers of the 15 schools in between, I say thank you. Thank you for being who you are. Thank you for believing in our young people of Mansfield. Thank you for all that you do to ensure that the eyes of our Mansfield children twinkle with pride, confidence, passion and courage to be all they dream to be. My warmest wishes for a wonderful World Teachers' Day.