




Speech By
Hon. Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR MCCONNEL

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

State Schools, Infrastructure

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations) (9.57 am): The Palaszczuk government is building the infrastructure our state schools need to ensure our kids get a great start. Since 2015 we have delivered 13 new schools in communities across the state. In fact, there are some 2,000 more classrooms today than there were four years ago. We are continuing to invest in new schools and additional classrooms to cater for future enrolment growth. Aren't state schools great schools, and aren't people speaking with their feet?

Media reports yesterday suggesting that more than 100 state schools were operating above their capacity did not accurately represent the build capacity of these schools. A school's more than adequate build capacity is the actual number of students who can be accommodated in classrooms at that school and no student is turned away from their local state school. Next year the government will open eight new schools in some of the fastest growing communities in Queensland—Yarrabilba, Ripley Valley, Coomera, Mango Hill, Caboolture, Calliope and Fortitude Valley. That will take the total number of new schools opened since the election of the Palaszczuk government to 21, and a further two schools for Dutton Park and Baringa will open in 2021. This is a tremendous boost to public education in Queensland delivered by this Labor government.

Our ambitious infrastructure program has the added benefit of creating jobs in the state's construction industry. The \$80 million Inner City North State Secondary College in Fortitude Valley will support 300 full-time jobs. The new \$64 million high school at Coomera—I turned the sod with the member for Gaven just last week—will create 170 full-time jobs. With regard to the Yarrabilba State High School in the electorate of Logan—I turned the sod with the member for Logan—this \$65 million project will create 170 jobs. The Calliope State High School, championed by the member for Gladstone, is a \$66 million project that will create 180 local jobs.

There are new primary and secondary schools in Ripley Valley, in the electorate of Bundamba, at \$120 million, supporting 316 local jobs. There is the new special school at Caboolture—a project that I know the member for Morayfield and minister is keeping a close eye on—at \$24 million, supporting 64 jobs. There is the new high school at Mango Hill, in the Murrumba electorate, at \$64 million, supporting 170 full-time jobs. In total, these eight projects are supporting some 1,370 jobs for Queenslanders. If we add all the projects to provide new and refurbished facilities at existing schools across the state, that shows that the Palaszczuk government is supporting around 2,700 jobs through its education infrastructure program.

The Palaszczuk government is also creating jobs by employing more teachers. Currently, there are 1,165 additional full-time-equivalent teachers and 264 full-time-equivalent teacher aides working in schools today compared to 12 months ago. Since the election of the Palaszczuk government, the

number of full-time-equivalent teachers in Queensland's state schools has increased by more than 4,800 and the number of teacher aides has grown by close to 1,400. The Palaszczuk government is building the education infrastructure that Queensland's state schools need and, in doing so, is supporting jobs for Queenslanders and giving every child a great start.