



Speech By  
**Hon. Grace Grace**


**MEMBER FOR MCCONNEL**

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Record of Proceedings, 13 June 2019

## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Budget, Education**

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations) (9.51 am): This budget is an education budget with the Palaszczuk government again demonstrating our strong commitment to education because we know a great education makes a difference. The Department of Education's total budget for 2019-20 is a record \$13.8 billion, an increase of nearly \$800 million or 6.1 per cent on the budget last year. Some \$9.5 billion, or around 70 per cent of the overall budget allocation, will be invested in our state schools, an increase of \$500 million or 5.6 per cent on the previous year.

The Palaszczuk government made a commitment to employ an additional 3,700 teachers over four years to meet growth in the state school sector, and we are delivering on that commitment. In this budget there is additional funding to employ 1,000 additional teachers and over 200 extra teacher aides to cater for increased enrolments in our Queensland state schools. It also includes funding to continue our staff and student wellbeing programs and our regional and remote strategy. Also included in this investment is a boost of at least 240 teachers and teacher aides to ensure students with a disability get the support they need. This is an injection I am particularly proud of.

The continued record investment in education has been well received by our key stakeholders. The President of the Queensland Association of Special Education Leaders, Roselynn Anderson, enthusiastically commended the 2019 budget for the disability education sector. Further to this, we announced \$63.6 million to continue funding early childhood development programs and services in 102 centres for children with a disability aged zero to five years. The Queensland Teachers' Union has acknowledged this as one of the stand-out announcements in this year's education budget.

We are also investing in early childhood education to ensure we give all Queensland children a great start in life, no matter where they live across the state. In this budget, there is \$293 million for early childhood education, up 8.2 per cent or \$22 million on the previous year. This includes \$25.6 million this year to support the operation of Early Years Places in more than 50 locations around the state. These Early Years Places offer a one-stop shop providing young families with the support they need, such as early childhood programs, child and maternal health services and parenting programs. We also have ongoing funding provided to deliver Remote Kindergarten in up to 67 Queensland state schools which has supported access to kindy for almost 400 kids since 2016 in the most far-flung parts of the state, where there is no other kindergarten service nearby.

In addition, the 2019-20 budget includes—and I am very proud of this—a record \$1.464 billion infrastructure spend. This investment will see the total number of new schools opened by our government since 2015 increase to 26—eight to be opened next year and five to be opened in 2021. Throughout the state we see schools receive funding for new classrooms, refurbishments and facility upgrades and enhanced maintenance and minor works under our SIE and SSS programs. As I announced, this budget will also include early works for a new secondary school at Palmview, which is forecast to open in 2023.

The added benefit of our huge education infrastructure program is the jobs it will create in the building and construction industry, which was acknowledged by MBA members when I visited and addressed them last week. Our infrastructure program is expected to support around 4,200 jobs across our state, particularly in regional Queensland. The 2019-20 budget means the Department of Education can continue to give Queensland kids a great start by providing a world-class education wherever they live in this great state.