




Speech By
Jarrold Bleijie

MEMBER FOR KAWANA

Record of Proceedings, 3 April 2019

EDUCATION (QUEENSLAND COLLEGE OF TEACHERS) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (6.55 pm): It is a pleasure to speak to the Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Amendment Bill 2019. When we debate bills relating to education, it gives us an opportunity to speak about the great profession of teaching and also the wonderful schools in our electorates. Many a time in this place we debate philosophical or ideological issues, but when we debate matters relating to education, we come together because our kids are too important. That said, can I say that, in terms of—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Order!

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I will save it for tomorrow. This bill introduces the accreditation of highly accomplished and lead teachers. This initiative follows a review conducted by the government and also a trial of this accreditation. As the minister indicated earlier, 800 people applied to undertake this accreditation. I acknowledge the LNP members of the committee—the member for Currumbin, the deputy chair of the committee, and the member for Pumicestone—for the committee's report on the bill. They did a great job in advocating for the recommendation that the bill be supported.

The report indicates that 800 teachers expressed an interest in being lead teachers or highly accomplished teachers. Of those 800 teachers, 500 teachers went through a process of being selected for the pilot program and 180 teachers participated in it. As I understand it, 44 teachers were appointed highly accomplished teachers and three were appointed lead teachers.

That alleviates some concern that every teacher who signed up for the program would receive the accreditation. We want the best of the best teaching our kids. Although it is a voluntary career development program, we do not want the accreditation to be easy to obtain, because we could fall into the danger of people getting the accreditation just for the money and not the real reason, which is that we want the best of the best teaching our kids. We have to do that, because I believe there are some real issues in education. Standards are slipping. Recently, the NAPLAN results were released and I have great concerns about some of the results in various areas in Queensland. The best thing we can do is to ensure that we have the best of the best teachers.

When the LNP was in government, under the original Gonski funding, we introduced the master teachers program. We gave schools the opportunity to employ master teachers to show we were serious about ensuring teachers were able to get the additional support, encouragement, advice and training they needed from master teachers. At that time I remember talking to many principals in my electorate and particularly one at Talara Primary College, who took up the opportunity of having a master teacher. That principal said that not only was it an amazing opportunity to have a master teacher but also they were able to direct where they wanted the funding to go for the school under the Great Results Guarantee, which the LNP introduced. I note that the government has not cancelled that program. It has called it something else—it is building for success, or whatever—but it is essentially the Great Results Guarantee. That program was about empowering schools by giving them the autonomy

to plan. Every school has different challenges. Every school has a different emphasis and focus. What may be a solution to issues or results in one school on the Sunshine Coast may not be a solution for a school in the electorate of the member for Currumbin, for example, or a school in regional or rural Queensland. We have to make sure that we have the capacity in the schools and the leaders in the schools to be able to determine what is in the best interests of the students and the school community. Ultimately, that is what this bill is all about.

I note that this accreditation is a voluntary career progression. The pilot program has been instituted and completed. The LNP will be supporting the Queensland College of Teachers to be the accreditation agency for it, recognising that the Liberal National Party members on the committee supported and backed the bill.

Debate, on motion of Mr Bleijie, adjourned.