




Speech By
Jessica Pugh

MEMBER FOR MOUNT OMMANEY

Record of Proceedings, 13 June 2019

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

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (9.32 pm): State schools are great schools. In my contribution to the budget reply today, I will be focusing on the funding for my amazing local state schools, because at the end of the day these students are the future of Queensland. A few weeks ago, I was a speaker at the leadership forum for the Centenary Learning Alliance of State Schools, or CLASS—

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Ms PUGH: It was very exciting, member for Buderim. I hope you have such wonderful state schools in your electorate. The schools involved were Jindalee, Middle Park, Darra and Jamboree Heights State School, which hosted the event. I shared with the kids that I began to consider a career in politics not long after I left primary school when I came and did work experience at Parliament House under the guidance of the wonderful Roylene Mills, who still works in the parliamentary team today.

The student leaders and I spoke on a number of issues, including why I became a member of the Queensland parliament and not the federal parliament. I told the kids it was because I am so passionate about Queensland that I think I would have a really hard time giving funding to anything outside Queensland as I think it is the best state in Australia bar none. If I were in federal parliament, I would pass legislation to only ever play State of Origin right here in Queensland. I cannot wait to see it played at the new Townsville stadium.

I talked to the kids about the changing world view of leadership and how more feminine qualities, such as empathy and collaboration, are on the rise in political leadership thanks to female leaders such as Jacinda Ardern and of course our own Premier, Annastacia Palaszczuk. I think the world is a better place for it. The children at the leadership event told me that they thought kindness was the most important trait in a leader and I could not agree more.

My role came just a few weeks after the Premier's visit to her former primary school, Jamboree Heights. The kids were beyond excited when the Premier came to read to the class and kick off this year's Premier's Reading Challenge. She told the nervous student leaders that she used to study at Jamboree Heights. In fact, she was in the second intake of students, so she started there just the year after it opened but she would not tell the students what year she started. The Jamboree Heights kids are no fools. They had done their reading and they knew exactly what year she had started and they sang it to her in unison.

It is with these students in mind that I have reflected on the critical importance of education to young people in shaping their values, their ambitions and their belief that truly anything is possible for a Mount Ommaney state school student—you can even become Premier of this state. That is why I am so excited about the education budget bounty that my electorate has received because I know that every single dollar spent on our kids is money well spent.

Our fantastic Centenary State High School will receive \$900,000 for seven new buildings. That is more room to showcase their brilliant music and arts students under the tutelage of Fiona Harvey. We have got \$3 million for new buildings at Mount Ommaney Special School, led by new principal Wayne, deputy Mike as well as Chrissy, Kerry and Karen. They are a really special and passionate bunch at Mount Ommaney Special School and the school is growing every year. We have got \$300,000 to refurbish C block at Jindalee State School which Minister Grace visited last year to see their STEM program in action. We have got \$100,000 to fix the preppies room for Mrs Ngyuen and Gayle Healey at Darra State School—my tiniest but arguably my mightiest state school. For the Premier's former school of Jamboree Heights, we have got \$450,000 of a total \$2½ million for additional classrooms.

Like I said, state schools are great schools, and I am proud that in my relatively short 18 months as a member no fewer than three of my local schools have had ministerial visits. When I was at Jamboree Heights just a few weeks ago, I spoke with principal Cam Wallace and deputy principal Natalia Crawley during the Premier's visit and they did not miss the opportunity to press the case for their students and their need for increased infrastructure. I am so pleased that this budget delivers.

When Minister Grace became the education minister, the very first school she visited was the mighty Corinda State High School, and I know she was incredibly impressed by the staff there. In fact, I reckon just quietly that this visit would have been hard to top. A few months ago I attended an International Women's Day event at Corinda State High School where I was a panellist on issues around gender equity and the challenges that women face in the workplace. I am pleased to report that our future leaders absolutely understand the benefit of having gender equity in leadership roles. I can only hope that enlightened attitude can rub off on some of those opposite. It was incredibly exciting to see almost \$10 million going to Corinda State High School for new scoped works, including a new multistorey resource centre and student services centre. Corinda school is bursting at the seams because of its excellent academic results, and these new classrooms cannot come soon enough.

Every dollar spent in our state schools is money well spent. I am so proud of my local schools, my amazing teachers and principals and the spectacular students and parents who make up the Mount Ommaney community. I am thrilled to be able to deliver for them in this budget.