




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR GLADSTONE

Record of Proceedings, 4 February 2020

MATTER OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Calliope State High School

 **Mr BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (2.50 pm): This afternoon I rise to talk about a truly fantastic event that happened last week in an electorate next to mine—that is, the opening of the Calliope State High School. Calliope used to be in the Gladstone electorate and the Gladstone electorate continues to help and support that community just down the road from my electorate office. Last week it was an absolute honour to be beside the new principal of Calliope State High School, Pete Stansfield—or, as the students call him, Mr Pete, because that is the way they are running the school—and welcome some of the first students coming into the new high school. This fantastic \$66 million school had over 165 year 7 and 8 students starting last week who will be taught by nine brand-new teachers who are now teaching in Queensland schools who in turn are supported by 17 staff. As we heard this morning, that is what this government is doing with regard to the eight brand-new schools that started up in Queensland last week.

Ms Grace: All on time.

Mr BUTCHER: They are all on time and all on budget, and I acknowledge the fact that these are the best schools for the best outcomes for these kids. Those numbers will continue to grow in Queensland because the Palaszczuk Labor government supports these full-time jobs in these schools and will continue to do so. I want to thank the principal, Mr Pete, for his hard work in connecting with the local community, and we certainly know the work that went in over many years to try to get this high school off the ground. He has hit the ground running with that fantastic high school in Calliope and I know that he and all of the teachers there will do a fantastic job for that community.

It is no secret that the opening of this school has been a long time coming for the wonderful community of Calliope. When I ran for the great seat of Gladstone in 2015 I pledged on that day that if the Palaszczuk government was elected we would stop the sale of the land that had been set aside and put on the market by the Newman LNP government. I made a pledge with community leader Linda Ninness during that time and I pledged that I would save that land. As a Labor government we went one step better and delivered a brand-new high school for that community. There was a growing need in that community for a high school to service the over 350 students travelling into Gladstone and Tannum Sands every day just so that they could get to school.

Since 2013 the community has been led and championed by Linda Ninness—a truly amazing woman for that community. She has been fighting to save that high school land and to get some acknowledgement that a school was necessary for that community. As I said, not only did we save that land; we now have a \$66 million investment on that block of land. To tell members the truth, after going through that school I can say that it is state of the art. It is one of the best schools that I have ever seen. I would have loved to have gone to that school as a student.

On Tuesday of last week standing in a world-class education facility that was built in just 12 months was simply outstanding and incredible to be part of. The construction of the new school supported over 180 local jobs on this project. I went out to the site on many occasions—I went out there

with the Minister for Education and I went out there with the Premier—and every time I visited the site there were local contractors on the ground. There was Calliope Plumbing doing the plumbing works and early works. There was Cutuli Electrical doing all of the electrical installations and many more Gladstone companies that were doing the civil works and the concreting works on this fabulous school. After talking to the principal last week, I know that 75-plus per cent of work that was done was done by local contractors in Gladstone.

I was very impressed by the quality of the learning spaces and the expanse of the green areas, particularly the Rugby League footy field. I also note that the new principal is now a member of the local football club, making sure that those students get every possible chance to get active on the wonderful fields that have been supplied. Last Tuesday was a big day for the state government and state education in Queensland because, unlike those opposite, the Palaszczuk government is committed to investing in our education system and is proud to have delivered, as I said, eight brand-new state schools—an investment of nearly half a billion dollars in this state. Those opposite said that Calliope did not need a high school. That is shameful for them. I cannot wait to watch this school grow into the future, because that community deserved a high school and that community got one delivered by this fantastic Palaszczuk Labor government.