



Speech By
Hon. Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR MCCONNEL

Record of Proceedings, 2 December 2020

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Budget, Education Infrastructure

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.45 am): The Palaszczuk government recognises that as communities grow our education system needs to grow with them. We are planning ahead to cater for that growth across the state. Well done, Treasurer, for a budget with a record \$14.2 billion investment in education and a record infrastructure spend of \$1.9 billion so that all Queensland children, no matter where they live, enjoy world-class facilities when they go to school.

On top of that, \$1 billion in additional money will be invested over four years to deliver the largest ever portfolio of infrastructure works, part of the Great Schools Great Future initiative, which will give all Queensland children and young people a great start to their future. This planned investment builds on the \$5.2 billion spent on school infrastructure since 2015. It will not only deliver new school halls, performing arts centres and new classroom blocks; it will also include smaller projects such as refurbishments to school amenities blocks, playground upgrades, security fencing and improved facilities to ensure that our schools have equitable access for all students.

This record education infrastructure budget will not only benefit our Queensland students but also support a total of more than 3,100 construction jobs, helping drive economic recovery following the COVID-19 health pandemic. This investment will see \$394 million over two years spent building 46 new classroom or administration buildings, supporting 1,300 jobs. The budget includes \$235 million to deliver 26 new multipurpose halls and performing arts centres, and 11 extensions or enclosures to existing halls, supporting 775 jobs. I know that many members are looking forward to that work starting. Another \$100 million will fund 172 refurbishment and renewal projects, including projects such as upgrades to school learning and support spaces. There is \$45 million for local shovel-ready projects in schools such as playground and fencing upgrades, supporting 148 jobs and \$20 million for planning for new schools.

The Palaszczuk government is also supporting the non-state sector with \$180 million over three years from 2021-22 for school infrastructure in Catholic and independent schools. Yesterday afternoon it was great to hear Independent Schools Queensland publicly praising this great budget.

We all know how important education is. The Palaszczuk government, including the Treasurer, the cabinet, and all members on this side of the House, will continue to provide world-class facilities for four more years so that our students can continue to get a world-class education.