




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MACALISTER

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ADJOURNMENT

Macalister Electorate, Schools

 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (7.27 pm): My Macalister schools have been doing an amazing job over the past few months—from the uncertain days of March when the impacts of the pandemic started to enter the public consciousness, to the massive work undertaken by teachers over the school holiday period to prepare for learning at home, to facilitating online and in-class learning experiences, and now to transition back to the classroom. Our state schools are great schools and they have demonstrated this in spades.

I have spoken to all of my school principals a number of times over the past few weeks to gauge how they were travelling and what they were each doing to adjust their school systems and, more importantly, to support students and their families. I understand that schools in my electorate are not flush with electronic learning devices and tablets, and the feedback I got was that hard copy packs were by far the most popular resource amongst Macalister families. Many of my schools, including Edens Landing State School that I visited last week, were running drive-through learning pack pick-up zones. There I got to have a chat with the teachers who were missing their students and the parents who were more likely than not missing their schools. They showed uniformly that they were prepared to be flexible and adaptable to ensure a good learning experience for their kids.

I would like to acknowledge the many parents out there who potentially now have a greater understanding of what it takes to engage a student in learning. I trained as a high school teacher but that did not make facilitating my children's learning from home any easier. In fact, my high school approach did not find too many fans amongst my primary schoolers. This was not an easy time for anyone, and no-one said or thought it would be. We are in the midst of a global pandemic and this was not meant to be rainbows and butterflies but, by and large, we have gotten through this. We are almost there on the other side in terms of schooling for our kids, and I am certainly very thankful that the grade 1ers went back to school last week. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the herculean efforts of our school staff—our teachers, teacher aides and school cleaners, all under the able leadership and stewardship of our school principals.

Thank you for being so flexible. Thank you for placing the needs of our kids first. Thank you for going above and beyond, for teaching in a way that was not covered during your training and was not in your initial job description. Like frontline Queenslanders the length and breadth of this state, teachers have improvised, adapted and overcome.

Unfortunately, the LNP has locally taken this as an opportunity to attack our school principals, demanding that parents call police on our principals if they were unhappy with decisions made by these principals in the interests of their students. If we could hand out medals to our frontline workers for their efforts over this time, our principals should be rightly considered. However, it appears that the LNP would rather have them arrested and taken away from their schools. Shame!