




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR CHATSWORTH

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ADJOURNMENT

High School Seniors 2020

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (7.00 pm): I rise this evening to pay tribute to the soon-to-be graduating high school seniors of 2020. I am very fortunate to have the outstanding San Sisto Girls College in my own electorate of Chatsworth, but I would like to extend my tribute in this speech to all the year 12 seniors throughout Queensland.

This 2020 cohort has endured many firsts. I stand to be corrected, but I believe this year group was one of the first to undertake prep year, NAPLAN testing and the transition from the old OP tertiary entrance system to the new ATAR system. They are now the first generation in over a century to study through a pandemic.

Throughout Queensland, year 12 senior students have shown remarkable resilience and adaptation in the way they have undertaken their studies during this challenging period. My youngest son, Lachlan, who turns 18 today, is part of this cohort and I have witnessed firsthand how he has had to modify his study and extracurricular program this year. The academic program and sporting calendar have been adapted where required, yet when I drop him off at school the way in which he and his mates just 'get on with it' is truly inspirational. I am aware there has been consternation over school formals, awards nights and schoolies week, but the positive way in which this year 12 cohort of 2020 has continued on is remarkable.

I also pay tribute to the outstanding teachers and support staff throughout Queensland in both the private and public system regardless of where they are located. Their professionalism and dedication to maintaining the educational needs of the year 12 students of 2020 is of the highest order. My wife, Roz, is a teacher at a private college, and the way in which she threw herself into online study delivery was simply outstanding. It was common for her to be preparing online lessons into the early hours of the morning.

To the year 12 senior students throughout Queensland I would say that, although this year has been harrowing and challenging, remember that you have earned the admiration and respect of your teachers, your parents, your family, your friends and all of the members of parliament in this chamber. The level of maturity and resilience you have all shown during this unforgettable year will hold you in good stead for the rest of your life. Your particular year group has endured more change than any other year group before you. I cannot begin to tell you how proud I am of you all.

To the year 12 students throughout Queensland: I wish you all the very best as you embark upon your senior exam block period in the coming weeks. Remember that your final marks do not determine your destiny in life. Sure, they are important for those of you who wish to embark on university studies, but your ATAR is not the thing which will define you. Remember that the gloomy skies will clear and the sun will shine in your lives for many years to come. Never stop chasing your dreams. Look after yourselves mentally and physically. Take a few calculated risks. Be a critical thinker. Challenge what you read and see. Look after your mates. Follow your passion in life. You are a remarkable year group. Go forward and proudly make your mark.