




Speech By
Aaron Harper

MEMBER FOR THURINGOWA

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ADJOURNMENT

Clontarf Academies; Project Booyah

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (7.13 pm): I rise to talk about Clontarf academies. I am proud to have three of those academies in my electorate of Thuringowa and to support them. They are located in Heatley Secondary College, Kirwan State High School and Thuringowa State High School. We have a fourth academy in the Townsville electorate, at Townsville State High School. All up, in North Queensland there are 625 students in those academies, and they are fantastic. I went to every single one of their graduations just recently in the Thuringowa electorate.

I give a shout-out to the team. Kirwan has 238 students and it is run by Kelvin Caspani; Heatley has 106 students and it is run by Nathan Murphy; and Thuringowa has 118 students and it is run by Rhys Matsen. That is 466 young, proud Indigenous men in those three academies in Thuringowa. I saw 44 of them graduate with their QCE. Most, if not all, have already picked up employment, which is fantastic. Townsville State High School also has 102 students and it is run by Luke McInerney. I note that Mackay—normally Julieanne is here—also has an academy with 72 students and it is run by Mena. In 2022 we will see 90 students enter year 12. I am a proud supporter of Clontarf because its aims are to keep people in education.

Mr Watts: Hear, hear!

Mr HARPER: I take that interjection. They are achieving that and more. They are making sure that people stay in education, graduate with a QCE and then gain employment, skills or training. This is fantastic. They continue to punch above their weight in terms of outcomes. I look forward to an opportunity—I am talking with the Speaker and the Minister for Education—to potentially host Clontarf students in parliament in February 2022. They will all be down here. I think there are 11 academies throughout the state. There could be more. I know that the Far North has six academies as well. I welcome all members attending those if we can pull it off. I am working with the Speaker and the education minister. As I said, they continue to punch above their weight in terms of outcomes.

I also acknowledge the eight young women who recently graduated from Project Booyah in Thuringowa. It is another great program. Some 83 per cent are returning to education. They get skills. Some of the parents at the graduation were really proud to see their young women. A couple of cohorts of young women have completed that course. I was really pleased with the way they articulated themselves and spoke so proudly. What Project Booyah has done for those young people is second to none. I congratulate Jan and the team at Project Booyah in Townsville.