




Speech By
Daniel Purdie

MEMBER FOR NINDERRY

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ADJOURNMENT

Coolum State School; Coolum State High School

 **Mr PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (7.26 pm): While we are talking about the education minister, I want to talk about two great schools in my electorate. Coolum State School is one of the region's pioneering schools, celebrating its centenary in 2017. When it opened in 1917 there were 11 students. Today enrolment numbers sit at over 1,000. In that same time the local population has boomed and the school now services one of the fastest growing areas on the coast.

Over the past two years the hardworking school community, supported by Coolum locals, fundraised around \$400,000 of their own money to upgrade the school's electrical systems in preparation for the highly anticipated rollout of air conditioning. Last year we were told the tenders had been sent out and the school was on track to have their air conditioning installed over the 2020 summer holidays. Unfortunately, this never eventuated. Students, teachers and staff instead sweltered through another hot Queensland summer, and despite asking the minister for an update on when the school will be air-conditioned we still have no answers.

When the state government backflipped and announced its \$477 million Cooler Schools Program last year, nearly two thirds of all Queensland schools were already air-conditioned. Twelve months later Coolum State School is one of more than 1,000 still waiting. Why is it that Coolum State School, despite spending \$400,000 from its own fundraising to upgrade electrical systems, is still waiting? Why the delay? Last year we heard reports of schools that had received their new air-conditioning units, only to find they could not be switched on because their electricity networks could not cope. To make matters worse, existing fans have been removed in preparation for the air conditioning, leaving students sweltering.

I would also like to make mention of another outstanding educational facility in my electorate, Coolum State High School. In recent years Coolum high has grown from strength to strength and now boasts a number of excellent programs and has an outstanding record of academic, cultural, sporting and educational achievements. Despite this performance and its recent growth the school lacks a purpose-built performance hall that can meet the needs of the expanding school curriculum and accommodate the entire school population. Last year members of the school community and the P&C launched a campaign to raise awareness of the need for this important new facility.

When the current principal, Troy Ascott, arrived at the school in 2017 there were only 980 students. This year the school has more than 1,400 students. Mr Ascott described how the school can no longer meet as one and how he has to divide the school in half just to have an assembly. Even then students have to sit on exposed concrete at the side of the undercover area trying to dodge bird droppings from the many birds who have now made the school hall their home. On behalf of both of these great schools I urge the minister to prioritise these infrastructure upgrades accordingly.