




Speech By
Hon. Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR MCCONNEL

Record of Proceedings, 2 September 2021

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Schools, Occupational Violence

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.48 am): The Palaszczuk government takes a zero-tolerance stance on violence in our schools. Through their school's code of conduct, students know what behaviour is acceptable at school. It should follow that parents and carers or other people entering our schools also behave in a respectful manner.

Schools are not only learning places but also workplaces. Just like any other workplace, our staff have every right to be safe at work and be treated with respect. That is why today we will be launching a new safe and respectful school communities campaign to raise awareness that violence and aggression towards school staff is not acceptable. This follows on from our successful 'Respect our staff, respect our school' campaign.

The new campaign's tagline is 'Your child, our student, one team', and this really sums up the message we want to get across. This campaign also forms part of our broader Occupational Violence and Aggression Prevention Strategy. Over the past 18 months, we have been working with key stakeholders to inform and identify the best way to prevent occupational violence in schools.

The strategy is looking at not only how we can better connect our staff with the support they need but also how we can build a culture within our schools to prevent this kind of behaviour to begin with—and everyone has a role to play. This campaign complements the review we are doing on respectful relationships education in schools. We are in consultation with over 70 stakeholders, including students.

We are able to roll out this campaign in Queensland because we are the only state on the eastern seaboard where schools are fully open, unlike New South Wales, for example, where students will not be returning to school until late October or at best early November. Our students are receiving face-to-face learning. We will not stop working to keep our schools safe and COVID free as we fight delta to protect our Queensland lifestyle.

In addition, I take this opportunity to thank my director-general Tony Cook for his leadership in this campaign and my department. I thank him for his excellent service over the last 3½ years. I wish him all the very best in his future role in the federal government.