




Speech By
Lance McCallum

MEMBER FOR BUNDAMBA

Record of Proceedings, 11 May 2021

ADJOURNMENT

Brisbane Jets; Bundamba Electorate

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (7.03 pm): West is best. That is the message I shared in a recent letter to Australian Rugby League Commission chairman Peter V'Landys. Like my fellow Ipswich MPs, I am backing the Brisbane Jets' bid to join the National Rugby League as the code's 17th team. Headed by Ipswich Jets chairman Steven Johnson, the western corridor campaign continues to gain momentum as the league looks to add another south-east side from 2023, and Queensland's fastest growing region is perfectly placed.

We are a proud defence region. Australia's biggest RAAF base at Amberley employs more than 5,000 people and the Jets name is already engrained in our community. The western corridor, more specifically Ipswich, is a long-time league heartland. Just this season we have seen local product Sam Walker become the most talked about rookie in the competition, replacing yet other Ipswich born player, an injured Luke Keary, at the Sydney Roosters. That success is only set to continue in line with population growth. By 2026 our local community will be home to about 20,000 Rugby League players—almost 30 per cent of the expected 73,000 across the state. The countdown has started and the Brisbane Jets are ready for take-off in the western corridor.

Ongoing population growth is also driving demand at our local schools. Last week we celebrated the official opening of a new \$10 million building at Fernbrooke State School. One of Ipswich's newest schools, Fernbrooke opened in 2017 in response to significant growth in the Redbank Plains area. Student enrolment has now passed 1,000. The new two-storey block accommodates years 5 and 6 students in 12 classrooms and also provides six teacher prep spaces, an outdoor learning area and student and staff amenities. Local projects like this are building on our record \$1.9 billion education infrastructure investment in 2021, supporting over 4,800 jobs as we continue our safe and strong COVID recovery. The Palaszczuk government has budgeted \$102.9 million to maintain, improve and upgrade Ipswich schools this year. We are also planning for new schools in the surrounding suburbs of Redbank, Ripley, Springfield and Brookwater.

Along with supporting local jobs, this ongoing recovery has seen our community calendars spring back to life in recent months, and for our local community this means the imminent return of the Ipswich show this weekend. The 148th show will be held as a COVID-safe event this Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Congratulations to Ipswich Show Society president Darren Zanow and all of the volunteers from the organising committee for working so hard to bring back our show after the challenges of 2020.