



Speech By
Rob Molhoek

MEMBER FOR SOUTHPORT

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ADJOURNMENT

Gold Coast, TAFE and Schools

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (6.11 pm): I rise to speak about recent improvements to TAFE in my electorate of Southport. I am so delighted that the new trades training centre has been completed. I was lucky enough to tour those new developments and to visit with some of the students. I was also fortunate to join the minister at the opening. I am grateful for the invitation. This new \$10½ million centre provides state-of-the-art facilities and training for around 850 students and future apprentices, including access for high school and international students. I was pleased to meet some of those students and many of the staff, along with a lot of local builders and other people from the construction industry.

Last week, I also was invited to tour the new allied health training facilities at the Southport TAFE, something that has been on the agenda for some time; in fact, we started looking into it back when we were in government. It is great to see that it has finally come to pass and that we now have a \$5 million fit-for-purpose facility. In fact, you could almost be mistaken for thinking that there was a new hospital with 65 beds in the middle of Southport. The set-up that has been implemented there is absolutely incredible. It is such an important asset as we continue to struggle to find the labour force of the future. We need to be training more people as allied health workers and nurses. The team at Gold Coast TAFE is doing an absolutely incredible job. I particularly pay tribute to Deb Blow, the head of that learning area. She has been at the Gold Coast TAFE for more than 20 years and has trained nurses and allied health workers for many years.

Both of these developments offer fabulous learning experiences for students. They are also great for the local economy because they do attract other people into the city. I particularly congratulate Karen Dickinson and the whole team at TAFE for their relentless effort in pursuing the funding for this and for their work in bringing these projects to fruition. I know that these things do not happen easily and that there was an incredible amount of planning in preparation and lead-up.

There still is so much more to do in the education space. Many of the local schools in my electorate are crying out for capacity improvements to meet the demand that has been fuelled by population growth on the Gold Coast. Our international education and training sector recently received a lifeline from the Commonwealth government but is still struggling to stay afloat. As we all know, education is such an important pillar of the Gold Coast and Queensland economies.