



Speech By  
**Amy MacMahon**


**MEMBER FOR SOUTH BRISBANE**

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## **ADJOURNMENT**

### **Education Funding**

 **Dr MacMAHON** (South Brisbane—Grn) (8.48 pm): I want to talk about something that affects every child in this state: education funding. This week we have seen that the federal Labor government is not going to up its contribution to schools funding in this country, and I want to know whether this state government is finally going to pay its share as well. It has been 10 years since the federal Labor government dragged its feet on legislating for needs-based school funding. It left it to the absolute last moment before the 2013 election, only for the incoming LNP government to trash it.

In Queensland, as with so many things in this place, the bar set by the Newman government was so low. On needs-based school funding the Newman government was criminally negligent, but this low, low bar has meant that Labor can do the literal bare minimum, make literally any improvement, claim record funding and claim a job done. The result has been that funding for public schools in Queensland has pretty much stagnated.

With the Commonwealth kicking in 20 per cent of the Schooling Resource Standard, we need an 80 per cent share from Queensland for our kids to get a decent education, but what are we at? We are at just 69.2 per cent, with no plan to get to the full 80 per cent. The government's plan is to continue to underfund schools, aiming to get to just 75 per cent by 2032—and this is despite the fact that state schools look after some of the most marginalised students in Queensland. About 87 per cent of disadvantaged students in Queensland are in public schools.

In my electorate, one of the biggest high schools in the state, Brisbane State High School, my alma mater, went underfunded by about \$11 million in 2020. It has been left to the P&C, volunteers, parents and students to fundraise for essential resources like maintaining sports fields. They desperately need the funding they deserve to give thousands of Queensland students the education, the facilities and the sports fields they deserve.

The federal budget this week delivered yet another blow to our state schools. The Australian Education Union President, Correna Haythorpe, said this week that there is one election commitment that has not yet been realised, and that is Labor's promise to secure a pathway to a minimum of 100 per cent of the Schooling Resource Standard for public schools.

Not only are our schools wilfully underfunded but Queensland stands set to lose a state primary school, East Brisbane State School, to the Gabba demolition. This school is in a growing neighbourhood and has a growing school population, yet students do not know where they will be learning and playing come maybe 2025. If the education minister would like to find the funding needed to fully fund our state schools and to get priorities in Queensland right, maybe she should take advice from the students from East Brisbane State School, who have said, 'We need our school', 'Schools not stadiums' and 'Education first' and spend the \$2 billion they would spend on the Gabba on the education that we need instead.