



Speech By  
**Dr Christian Rowan**


**MEMBER FOR MOGGILL**

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## **PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENT**

### **Department of Education**

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (2.25 pm): Students, teachers and parents have returned to an education system in 2022 which is plagued by a plethora of integrity, accountability and transparency issues. One of the most outrageous integrity scandals which continues to linger over the state Labor government is the recruitment and selection process of a new school principal at the inner-city Brisbane City South State Secondary College.

This saga at the time revealed a shocking attitude by elected members of the Palaszczuk state Labor government towards due process and ethical standards—all of which can be attributed to the disdain that the state Labor government has for integrity, transparency and accountability. To this day, the Labor Minister for Education refuses to identify who the mystery MP was for which a favour was done at the time. Instead she prefers to avoid the very notion of being accountable to Queenslanders.

This is nothing to say of the fact that Queenslanders still do not know the final outcome of the May 2020 suspension of a deputy director-general of the Department of Education pending an investigation and final report being publicly released by the Public Service Commission. This is the same Public Service Commission which the Queensland Integrity Commissioner has raised a number of serious concerns about and which is an entity currently under investigation by the Crime and Corruption Commission, although the Crime and Corruption Commission itself is now currently under investigation and review.

Queenslanders deserve answers and Queenslanders deserve openness and transparency. At the end of last year I detailed serious allegations pertaining to the Department of Education's Integrity and Employee Relations Unit—allegations which were formally raised with me by two public servant whistleblowers connected to the Department of Education. Such allegations included workplace bullying, maladministration, nepotism and cover-ups within the Department of Education, with serious complaints about staff conduct that were effectively dismissed without due process and investigation.

As I told the Queensland parliament in November of last year, these whistleblowers have also documented examples and evidence of departmental procedures not being adhered to, as well as further evidence of computer hacking and material breaches of code of conduct and relevant standards by senior executives within the Department of Education.

Also, perhaps another glaring example of failing to be accountable and transparent with Queenslanders is this Labor government's abandoning of regular updating of the asbestos incident sample testing register. Rather than providing clear monthly updates, Labor secretly decided that parents must delve through 580,000 lines of data in a spreadsheet just to find out if there has been any asbestos testing at their school.

Just yesterday the Minister for Education made a \$1 billion early childhood announcement. As the member for Kawana clearly articulated, the Minister for Education could not even outline the detail and had to turn to her chief of staff or the director-general or others just to answer some simple questions as to how the money is going to be allocated and how it is going to be accessed. Given the extent and plethora of integrity and accountability issues that we are seeing here in Queensland, nothing short of a royal commission needs to be gazetted and commenced by this state Labor government.