




Speech By
Hon. Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR MCCONNEL

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

School Infrastructure

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.52 am): Our COVID-19 health response and economic recovery plan is working, with more Queenslanders in jobs now than ever before. I am proud that many of those Queenslanders have jobs not only building new schools in the fastest growing areas of our state but also improving and upgrading school facilities right across Queensland.

This year we visited three brand new schools opened to students—an almost \$200 million investment supporting 600 construction jobs. It was wonderful to witness these new world-class facilities firsthand with the Premier when we visited these schools earlier this month. Everleigh State School at Greenbank, in the electorate of Logan and next door to Jordan, welcomed over 200 students on day 1. Nirimba State Primary School at Caloundra South, in the electorate of Caloundra, welcomed 160 students. They were the best designed multipurpose court facilities that we have seen. They were truly amazing.

Mr Power: Everleigh is pretty good too.

Ms GRACE: Everleigh is pretty good as well. Coomera State Special School on the Gold Coast saw over 130 new students on its first day. They also had a pretty spectacular multipurpose court.

These schools will provide amazing educational opportunities for their students, but we cannot and will not stop there. As the Premier has said, contracts have now been awarded for four new schools opening in 2023. FKG Group, Hutchinson Builders and ADCO will build stage 1 of three primary schools at Augustine Heights in the electorate of Jordan, Ripley Valley in the electorate of Ipswich, Yarrabilba in the electorate of Logan and a beautiful brand new high school at Palmview in the electorate of Buderim.

These four new schools represent a total investment of almost \$330 million and will support around 900 local jobs. There is a new primary school at Palmview and a new special school at Palmview. Those three schools are probably some of the best world-class facilities that we have seen. They are truly amazing. Member for Buderim, you are welcome!

Opposition members interjected.

Ms GRACE: It is amazing that, even when you deliver three beautiful world-class facilities and new schools in their electorates, they still complain.

Stage 1 will see the construction of new multipurpose halls, amenities, canteen, admin blocks and general learning areas, with future stages delivering extensions and additional facilities to cater for growing communities. We know we need to keep pace with the growth that is occurring in our state to provide the facilities required for future students. That is exactly what we are doing. Our \$1.9 billion education infrastructure program is contributing significantly to our economic recovery with 21 new schools built and opened since 2015.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Ms GRACE: It is really good sometimes to laugh at the member for Kawana.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members to my left!

Ms GRACE: This investment not only includes big ticket items like new schools, halls, performing arts centres and classroom blocks but also includes smaller projects that make a difference to school communities—refurbs to amenities blocks, playground upgrades, security fencing and improved facilities to ensure our schools are accessible for all students, not to mention our air-conditioning of every classroom, library and staffroom right across Queensland. We are very close!

We have another 11 new schools in the pipeline—which is another \$1 billion of investment—including the first inner-city vertical primary school to be built in Toowong in the electorate of Maiwar. We are hoping to land that and compensate for everything, member, as soon as possible.

My department is also actively working to acquire land for new schools in these fast-growing areas so we can secure the best sites for our future schools. We continue our focus on getting people back to work as we unite and recover from the global COVID-19 pandemic. These new schools build on our record education infrastructure investment, which is second to none.