




Speech By
Hon. Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR MCCONNELL

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

NAPLAN

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.57 am): I join the Premier and the Attorney-General in welcoming the report and actions to stem domestic and family violence in this state.

Today marks the start of the NAPLAN testing period for 2022. Over the next two weeks, up to 300,000 students in almost 1,800 schools across the state will sit the annual national literacy and numeracy tests for years 3, 5, 7 and 9. I take this opportunity to wish all the participating students the best of luck—especially our year 3 students doing NAPLAN for the first time. I know it might be easier said than done, but I encourage students to relax, keep calm and simply do their best.

It has not been an easy time for our students, but our NAPLAN results last year held up very well despite everything COVID has thrown at us. Schools and students have shown time and time again how resilient they are. That said, compared with other parts of the world and indeed Australia, Queensland students have spent a very small amount of time away from school and face-to-face learning thanks to the Palaszczuk government's strong health response.

I always make the point that NAPLAN is not the be-all and end-all, but it does provide a useful point-in-time check for teachers and schools to identify how their students are tracking so they can put in place any additional targeted support that might be needed. This is what our dedicated teachers do day in, day out right across Queensland. Whether it is using NAPLAN results or their day-to-day classroom teaching, our teachers are focused on doing whatever is needed to help students reach their full potential. We want to ensure teachers have all the support they need to do this. Whether it is our commitment to employ over 6,000 new teachers in this term of government—with nearly 1,500 already employed—our Turn to Teaching internship program or our centres for learning and wellbeing, the Palaszczuk government will continue to value the role of our hardworking teachers.

I therefore welcome this week's campaign announcement from federal Labor that they will invest nearly \$150 million to boost teacher numbers. Their plan supports what we are doing here in Queensland, including practical measures such as bursaries of up to \$12,000 to encourage high-achieving year 12 students choose a teaching degree and 1,500 extra places for qualified professionals in other fields to take up teaching, which is similar to our Turn to Teaching program. The plan shows that federal Labor, like the Palaszczuk government, not only understands but truly values the vital role that teachers play right across our state.