




Speech By
Hon. Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR MCCONNEL

Record of Proceedings, 16 August 2022

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Path to Treaty, Education Programs

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.50 am): It is wonderful to be standing here today after the Premier has announced the historic next stage of the Path to Treaty and truth-telling inquiry. As the Premier said, Path to Treaty in Queensland is a critical step in setting the foundation for a new and just relationship, one that acknowledges the injustices experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and provides a platform for truth-telling, equality and opportunity.

I am keen to see education in schools play its role in this process and continue the cause of First Nations students and people more broadly. In the recent budget, I announced a \$43.2 million renewal program for schools in all 18 discrete Indigenous communities. All projects will be co-designed with local communities, and schools in Aurukun, Cherbourg, Coen, Kowanyama, Napranum, Woorabinda and Yarrabah, to name a few, will benefit. I know that projects like playgrounds, outdoor learning spaces and classroom upgrades will be at the top of the list for many of these schools and I cannot wait to visit later this year, as the Premier announced, in the Cape and Torres Strait to see firsthand the difference this investment will make.

I am proud of the programs we fund that help close the gap in educational outcomes, including Stars Foundation, Clontarf Academy, Netball Queensland's Diamond Spirit, the Brisbane Broncos and ARTIE, and I know the Treasurer's recent budget announced further funding for ARTIE. It is also wonderful to see that Indigenous studies and languages are being incorporated into the curriculum. For example, at Eidsvold State School in the electorate of Callide—and can I welcome the new member for Callide—has introduced a unique language program that has everyone in the school engaged with their community and learning the local Wakka Wakka language. After several years of planning and consultation with traditional owner groups, the Wakka Wakka Corporation and the community, the program is now delivered as a full Australian curriculum aligned languages subject. Teacher Lachlan McKenzie said—

Seeing Indigenous and non-Indigenous students all speaking, singing, dancing and laughing together while learning Wakka Wakka language and culture has been amazing!

I also acknowledge the work that Marsden State High School is doing with Indigenous students. I acknowledge them for winning the Secondary School and Principal of the Year awards at last week's Australian Education Awards. More Queensland schools were on those lists as finalists and award winners than any other state. It is a credit to all involved—current principal Alison Fahlbusch, previous principal Andrew Peach, staff, students and the whole community. I know the local member, the Attorney-General, is very proud of that school.

I am particularly proud to be part of this Palaszczuk government on this historic day and I look forward to attending not only the launch this afternoon but also seeing this being transferred into our schools following this announcement.