




Speech By
Hon. Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR MCCONNEL

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Federal Budget, Education

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.49 am): Mr Speaker, I acknowledge John Oliver and members in the gallery. What a difference an election makes. The first budget of the Albanese government is solid and sensible, delivers on their election promises, and is exactly what the country needs after years of chaos and neglect under the LNP with nothing to show for a \$1 trillion debt. What an impact it is going to have on Queensland families, schools and workers.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms GRACE: They do not like the truth. The \$4.5 billion plan to make child care cheaper is an absolute game changer and will support more than 285,000 families right across our state. After a decade of policy neglect and rising childcare costs, we finally have a federal government that gets it. Targeted, affordable childcare cost-of-living relief is good for families, good for children and good for the economy by improving workforce participation, particularly for women. It goes hands in hand with the Palaszczuk government's \$1 billion investment to make kindy cheaper or free for 40,000 Queenslanders, with full details available very soon.

The Albanese government also delivered on its \$530 million promise to deliver the biggest expansion to paid parental leave since it was introduced, reaching six months' paid leave in 2026. This budget also invests more than \$770 million for better schools, happier and healthier students and more qualified teachers, including mental health support and an investment in respectful relationships education. It complements the investment the Palaszczuk government is making with our \$100 million wellbeing program, our new respectful relationships material and our nation-leading EB agreement.

There is an investment in the future of our education workforce as well. We welcome \$485 million for 20,000 extra university places. There are 4,000 places for teachers and educators, including around 1,470 early education teachers. Five thousand bursaries worth up to \$40,000 will be given to Indigenous, remote and rural students who aspire to teach, with a bonus \$2,000 payment if they complete their final year practical placement in a regional area. I am excited about the \$14.1 million plan to teach First Nation languages in primary schools. Speaker, 480,000 fee-free TAFE and vocational training places will support industries experiencing skill shortages, including early education, with extra support for priority cohorts including women, Indigenous Australians and those living with a disability.

There is no doubt that this is a great family-friendly Labor budget. It is great for schools and students, it is great for workers and parents, and it is great for Queensland.