



Speech By
Barry O'Rourke

MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Rockhampton, Education Infrastructure

 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (2.40 pm): Education is something that is incredibly close to my heart. I know that is true for all of us on this side of the House. We all know that a great education can change a child's life for the better. It can break the cycle of poverty. It can offer children pathways to trade, tertiary education and a career. It can provide friendships and skills that last a lifetime. That is thanks to the hard work of our fantastic local educators. It is important that our government supports them to do their great job with world-class education infrastructure.

From 2015 to 2022 our Palaszczuk government invested over \$80 million in infrastructure for our local schools in the Rockhampton electorate. We have a huge pipeline of projects still to come, with a further \$33 million allocated for education infrastructure in Rockhampton for the 2022-23 financial year. I am incredibly proud of everything our government has been able to accomplish for schools in Rockhampton since 2015. I am particularly pleased with what we have been able to deliver for our special schools in both North and South Rockhampton. At Rockhampton North Special School we have delivered a special education space and an upgraded quadrangle. We are in the process of delivering a new multistorey learning centre with 11 new general learning areas for local students, thanks to an investment of over \$18 million. At Rockhampton Special School, we purchased two new buildings for students to use as the school grows.

Over at our wonderful Hall State School we have recently completed painting, and construction of a new \$13.8 million multipurpose hall for the school is nearing commencement. Of course, as we swelter through the beginning of autumn, I am grateful to see that our government has finished air-conditioning in every classroom in every school, not just in Rockhampton but across Queensland. This is in complete contrast to the LNP, which closed schools and tried to privatise our hardworking cleaning staff. We know that they like to sell, and they would sell out our children. I will always fight to make sure the Rockhampton electorate gets the investment it needs to support our thriving community so that families will keep coming to Rockhampton to live and learn for the decades to come.