




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MOGGILL

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Productivity Commission, National School Reform Agreement; School Swimming Programs

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (2.24 pm): Last month's release of the Productivity Commission's review of the National School Reform Agreement serves as yet another wake-up reminder for the Palaszczuk state Labor government. The Palaszczuk state Labor government must acknowledge that they are completely losing control of education in Queensland. Following the release of the review, Commissioner Natalie Siegel-Brown said it best when she stated—

Governments have boosted funding for schools and are implementing reforms to lift student outcomes. However, so far, this effort has had little impact on literacy and numeracy results.

... the commission recommends governments commit to firm targets to lift students' results—targets do not guarantee success, but they create a clear direction for reform and make governments accountable.

Further, and direct from the Productivity Commission review, was this key point—

Greater flexibility in progressing reforms should be accompanied by increased accountability for and transparency of results.

Firm targets, clear direction, performance reporting and government accountability—these are all the benchmarks in education which the Labor state government has neglected and ignored for the best part of the last decade, despite the many calls from the Liberal National Party opposition. Last year the Labor Minister for Education said that a new Equity and Excellence strategy would be finalised before term 1 of 2023. It was not until recently that this strategy was finally released, but even then it has been done so relatively quietly and with no significant announcement made by the Premier or Minister for Education and with only limited mentions of the strategy made by the Minister for Education. The Labor state government's failure to actively set targets, monitor outcomes and ensure open, transparent and regular performance reporting has had devastating and real consequences for Queensland's students, teachers and staff.

Across Queensland we have seen declines in student attendance. What is worse is that the declines are even more pronounced amongst Queensland's First Nations students. It must not be forgotten that last year's Queensland state budget revealed that not a single educational outcome target was achieved across reading, writing and numeracy through years 3, 5, 7 and 9. Queensland's teachers are doing a remarkable job and they need to be supported if they are to deliver improved results for our students.

In the interests of openness and transparency, I would also like to take this opportunity to call on the Labor state government to next week release the full results of its audit into the swimming programs of Queensland state schools. The Deputy Premier told Queenslanders in January that this audit was due for completion by the end of February 2023. It is incredibly important that the state government

listens to swimming and pool safety experts and ensures that equitable access to swimming programs is afforded to all students across our state. There is no doubt that Queensland's students, parents, teachers and staff deserve better.