




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR BANCROFT

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ADJOURNMENT

State Schools, Infrastructure

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (7.27 pm): Tonight I rise to talk about something that is happening within our schools. The health and wellbeing professionals being introduced into Queensland schools remind me of what a great job the Palaszczuk government is doing in building a better education system in Queensland. I firstly want to thank the Palaszczuk government for bringing in a GP and a psychologist into Deception Bay State High School under this program. Everyone at the school—the principal, the staff and the students—are so effusive in their praise for what we have delivered into this school because we all know that it makes such a difference to the lives of individuals and the life of the school as a whole.

I am reminded that this is exactly what our schools need—that is, social infrastructure as well as physical infrastructure. I am so pleased that once again the Palaszczuk government is investing in the social infrastructure of our schools. In fact, we are investing \$106 million over three years for our student wellbeing package in state schools. This will ensure that every student in every primary and secondary state school in Queensland has access to a health and wellbeing professional at their school. That means that students will get direct support for their wellbeing and their mental health from a range of professionals including social workers, guidance officers and youth workers.

The health and wellbeing program is only one part of the improvements that we are delivering to the state school system, and I will talk about the physical infrastructure as well. Let me say it again: every single classroom, library and staffroom in Queensland state schools is now air conditioned. That is around 10,000 spaces in 649 schools around Queensland. They are powered by an extra 80,000 solar panels on the roofs of our state schools.

Under the Palaszczuk government, our education and training budget is nearly \$20 billion, and that means funding for about 675 teachers and 200 more teacher aides. In fact, we spend \$1.2 billion each year on new schools and new and upgraded infrastructure. Our government has opened 21 new schools, at last count, since 2015 which means that we are opening five to six new schools every two years. In terms of physical infrastructure, Deception Bay State School—the oldest and smallest state school in my patch—is getting a brand new community hall. I want to thank the minister for that. As I said, it is the smallest and oldest school but it really needs that investment and I know that that will build the confidence of the staff and the students at that school.