




Speech By
Dale Last

MEMBER FOR BURDEKIN

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ADJOURNMENT

Burdekin Electorate, School Leaders

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (7.12 pm): John F Kennedy said, 'Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other.' Although the former president spoke these words decades ago in another land, his words have proven to be true in schools throughout the Burdekin electorate. In recent weeks, I have been honoured to attend several investiture ceremonies and last week I was able to spend time with school leaders in the western part of my electorate. Meeting these young leaders is both a privilege and an inspiration, and I would like to acknowledge Casey and Blake from Moranbah State High School, Angela and Heidi from Clermont State High School, and Karissa and Morris from Dysart State High School. In coming weeks, I will be meeting with school leaders from other schools throughout the electorate and I look forward to hearing their thoughts and plans for the year ahead.

Centres like Clermont, Dysart and Moranbah are major contributors to Queensland's economy. We only have to cast our minds back to the last budget where the Treasurer spoke of the increased mining royalties and said, 'All of that \$1.2 billion and more will be going into regional Queensland.' It is time for the Treasurer to start delivering on those words. As it stands today, we have teacher shortages, a school without a guidance officer, a multimillion-dollar facility that has produced award-winning apprentices in Moranbah sitting idle and, believe it or not, a school library in Central Queensland where the air conditioning has been out of action for more than 12 months. Planning for the future is also at a standstill with the learning centre, which the Minister for Education said would be completed for the start of the 2024 school year, still in the design phase.

It is not only about facilities. After meeting with the school leaders, I will be more than happy to provide the minister with a long list of projects that the students themselves believe would benefit them and their communities. In Dysart, for example, health is an issue for that school. Given the fact that Dysart is serviced by only one doctor, the suggestion of a school nurse who would be accessible to both students and staff makes a lot of sense. Like the wider community, the school leaders in Burdekin electorate are practical and realistic. They are not asking for more than their fair share; they are simply asking this government to deliver what was promised.

When you travel around those particular schools in the western part of my electorate, you get a sense of the resilience that those students have built into their schools and their communities and the hurdles and obstacles that they face—a senior student at Glenden is completing six of his seven subjects by School of Distance Education. They are the challenges that our students face in some of these more remote areas. If we are going to encourage families to move to rural and regional Queensland, then we need to provide them with all of the same services and facilities that their city cousins enjoy.

