




Speech By
Hon. Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR MCCONNEL

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Education

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.58 am): We have a world-class education system here in Queensland that we should all be rightly proud of. The latest snapshot from the Department of Education shows that we are continuing to head in the right direction on a number of fronts. New data released today shows that overall attendance levels at Queensland state schools are on the rise across all year levels, with an overall increase in attendance from around 86 per cent in 2022 to over 87 per cent in 2023—an increase of 1.5 per cent. It has been a very disruptive and atypical three COVID years, with attendance rates falling across Australia. These results show that we are bouncing back and that all of the work done to support students, boost engagement and maximise days of learning is starting to pay dividends. The data released this week also includes the annual School Opinion Survey results. Each year the School Opinion Survey invites students, staff and parents to have their say about schooling and learning at their school, with almost 240,000 responses received.

School communities across the state should take great heart from the very positive results, including the fact that 91 per cent of parents, caregivers and staff say that their school is a good school—with 80 per cent of students also agreeing that theirs is a good school. However, 97.7 per cent of students agreed that their teachers encourage them to do their best. There is always room for improvement, and schools can now use these results to better understand what they are doing well and to identify areas which may require additional attention. The latest education data also shows that, when it comes to class sizes, the vast majority of classes—97 per cent—met the agreed size targets. The majority of classes that were over target were over by just one or two students, often catering for individual student needs.

We are also seeing positive results from our Next Step survey, which tracks how our year 12 graduates make the transition to further study or employment. I want to congratulate our current year 12 student cohort, who have finished their final exams and are now just days away from formally completing their 13 years of schooling. It is such an exciting time in anyone's life and, really, the world is now their oyster.

The same goes for those very young Queenslanders who are about to embark on a life of learning thanks to our Kindy for All and free kindy from next year. This is part of a major statewide cost-of-living support package which will save Queensland families up to \$4,600 a year while giving their kids the best start in life. The Palaszczuk government will continue to work with all stakeholders and school communities to ensure we provide students with the best possible education, no matter where they live in Queensland.