




Speech By
Jim Madden

MEMBER FOR IPSWICH WEST

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Premier's Reading Challenge

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (2.30 pm): On 30 October I was delighted to attend the Leichhardt State School in Ipswich to present certificates to students for the Premier's Reading Challenge. The Premier's Reading Challenge is an annual statewide initiative for Queensland's state and non-state schools and home educated students from prep to year 9, as well as children aged up to five years enrolled in early childhood centres. The challenge began in April 2023 and ended in August. The Premier's Reading Challenge aims to improve literacy and encourage children to read for pleasure and learning.

The number of students who participated in the challenge across Queensland was truly outstanding. The total number of participants was 111,679 students, which is about half the population of Ipswich. The number of books read was over 1.5 million. Schools registered to participate numbered 889, while early childhood centres that participated totalled 323.

It was necessary for participating students to read 20 books to receive a certificate, but the efforts by the Leichhardt State School were truly amazing. Archer, a year 3 student, read 100 books, while Hunter, a year 1 student, read 120 books. A higher achiever was Annabellah, a year 3 student who read 151 books, while Shaunak, a year 4 student, read 180 books. The top Premier's Reading Challenge reader at Leichhardt State School for 2023 was Isabella, a year 3 student who read an astounding 312 books. That is between April and August of this year, five months—a truly amazing effort.

I would like to congratulate Maja Bogicevic and her staff for organising the Premier's Reading Challenge but particularly deputy principal Elena Finlay, who coordinated the challenge. I should mention that Elena was recently awarded the Dr John Dwyer Excellent Leadership in Teaching and Learning Award. Elena has been a teacher for 22 years and firmly believes that 'reading is everybody's business'. She works tirelessly with her colleagues at Leichhardt State School to improve students' literacy outcomes at the school. It would be remiss of me not to mention that one of Elena's colleagues includes the sister of the member for Bonney, Emily O'Connor, Head of Department—Teaching and Learning. It would also be remiss of me not to congratulate all of the students right across Queensland who participated in the reading challenge as well as their teachers and parents. I look forward to attending the awards night for the year 6 students of Leichhardt State School at the Ipswich Sports Club on 6 December.